

2d Artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Monthly Downloadable Magazine

InspiringAdvice

Top Industry Artists reveal Top Advice for Aspiring Artists inside...

Articles

Creatively Self-Employed - Good Business, Inspiring Advice for Artists

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Mike Coriero, Coro, Abrar Ajmal & Hoang Nguyen

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Creating a Brush from Scratch in Photoshop, Painting Armour Part 2 'Roman Soldier'



Editorial

Hello once again to 2DArtist Magazine. After over a year in business we have decided to push the bar a little further... We have an enormous list of great interviews, articles, making of's and tutorials ready for you this year, and we guarantee that every magazine will be as good as, if not

better than, this month's issue! We hope you all had a good New Year, plus any other celebrations over the December period. Early January for us is usually a case of "back to work blues", but I'm rather (sadly) excited about getting back to the desk and putting together the new issues of both 3DCreative and 2DArtist mags, checking out all of the new gallery submissions, and reading through all those interview answers, learning a thing or two from one of the many great tutorials we have on offer, and also (ashamedly) looking forward to ploughing through my 500+ email inbox from the festive period to see what you guys have said about the mags, and what suggestions you have all made. Hopefully I'll have the inbox cleared by late February, but keep the mails coming in anyway as we do reply to every single one of you! A big thanks to all of you for keeping us going, and also to all of our contributors, some of whom give up their time (usually around very busy schedules) to bring quality content to the masses! All the best for the New Year, Ed & the 2DArtist Team.

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Free Stuff!

Keep an eye out for similar symbols to this throughout the mag.

Wherever you see this symbol, click it to download resources,



Contributors



Mike Corriero

Concept Artist/
Illustrator/Freelancer,
NJ, USA. Most
of the work I do
involves the creation
of environments &

creatures for video games. Some of the work I've done lately has included pre-visual concept sketches for 'Radical Entertainment', card game illustrations for 'Breakaway Games' and assets provided to 'Liquid Development'.

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Contributing Artists

Every month, many creatives and artists from around the world contribute to 2DArtist Magazine. Here you can read all about them. If you would like to be a part of either 3DCreative or 2DArtist Magazines, please contact ben@zoopublishing.com.



Hoang Nguyen

I'm currently working
for EA and spend
most of my free time
painting. I've been in the
game industry for
over a decade and

before that I was drawing comics for 'Marvel',
'Dark Horse' and 'DC Comic'. I want to integrate
my 2D artworks with the latest 3D technologies.

There is so much to learn and so little time...

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Daarken

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Emrah Elmasli

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remotely. I would like to work as a Concept
Artist in a video game company someday.
www.partycule.com
emrah@partycule.com



totalTextures

v4: r2

Humans & Creatures

The Original Total Texture collection was created in 2001, utilising the best methods and technology of the time. Since then, techniques and technology have both moved forward, and here at 3DTotal we felt that although the original collection is still widely used and highly regarded among artists and studios of all calibers, it was time for an update...

This enormously improved version of the original texture collection now contains 272 individual Materials, comprising of over 938 individual, hand crafted texture maps. Every Texture now has its own unique colour map, bump map. There is also over 50 new alpha and 100 new specular maps.

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31 Creature Eyes
11 Creature Furs
2 Creature Miscellaneous
6 Creature Scales
14 Creature Skin (Body)
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13 Human Skin (Tatoo)
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15 Human Skin (Reference)



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AN INTERVIEW WITH **MIKE CORRIERO**

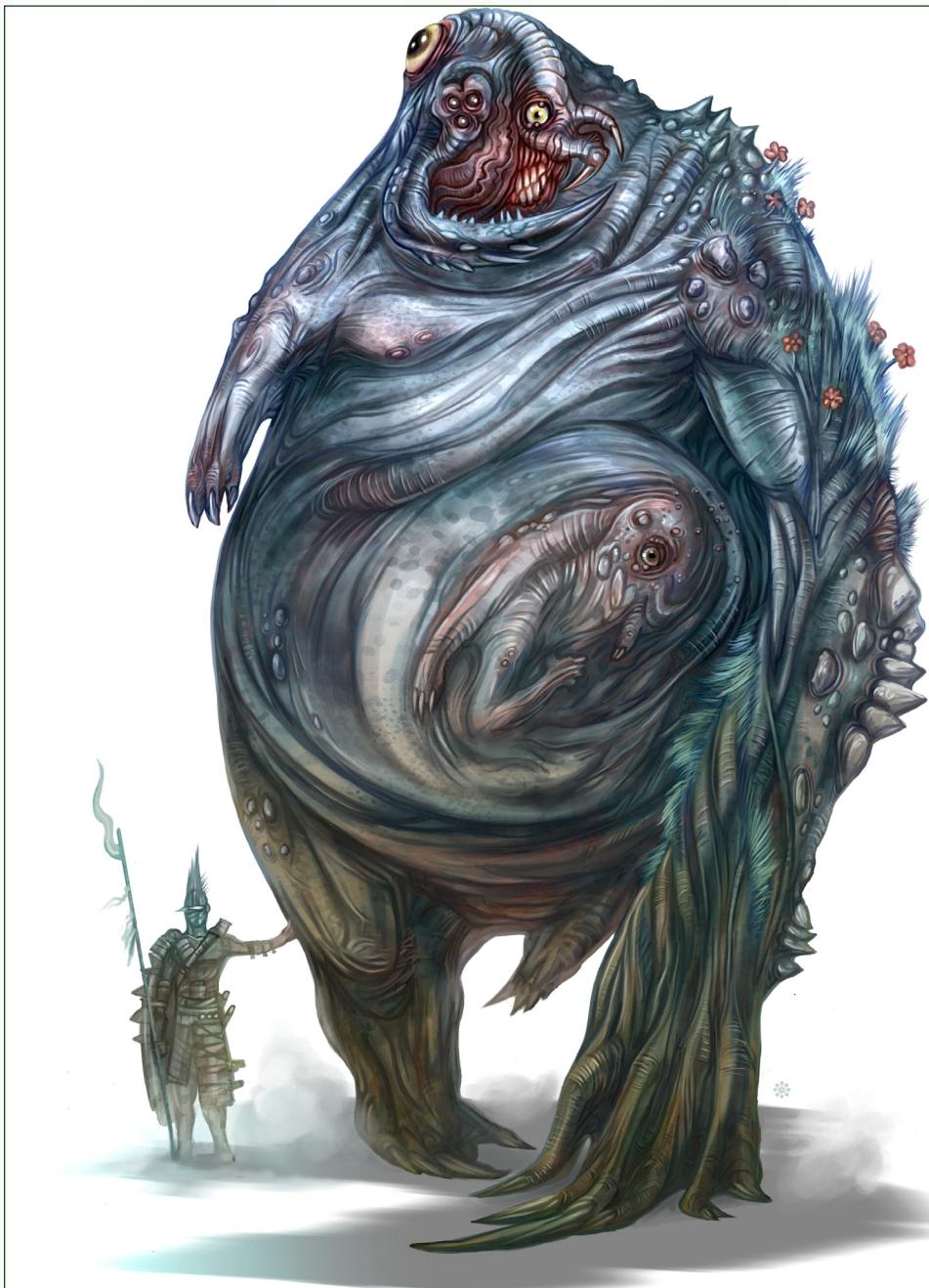
Mike has been pursuing his art career since he left college. Knowing that working 9 till 5 on minimum wage wasn't what he wanted, he decided to go freelance, and has been enjoying it ever since...

MIKE CORRIERO

Could you describe your path into the realm of the freelance artist and tell us a little about what really established your position in this field?

Well, after college my first instinct was to look for a full-time job with a major entertainment studio, whether it was in the film industry or video game industry. I was finishing my senior year and wasn't quite sure where to start. So after college I figured I would have to either get a part-time job working at some local food store, or try to freelance with my own art. I'm not one to work a 9 till 5 job, or work for minimum wage, so I pushed as hard as I could to get some kind of freelance gig and to continue improving my personal work on the side. It was hard not having a website at the time, spending a lot of time on forums trying to get the word out there, promoting my work, getting my name known and meeting other artists. I think what helped get me known mostly was finding a couple of outsourcing companies that took me on as an artist that they regularly sent work to. This helped keep a steady work flow coming in and the opportunity to work on some larger projects.

I was already getting a good handle on dealing with contracts, negotiations and establishing relationships with clients. A freelance artist really needs to spend just as much time promoting their work as they do actually working on art. You need to continue to post on forums, update your website, continue to learn and improve, spend time on personal art and paid work, contact open freelance positions and get to know other artists who work for companies that outsource work. The promotion end of a freelance artist and dealing with contracts and negotiations is a job unto itself.





What do you feel are the advantages and disadvantages of being freelance? Freelancing definitely has its advantages. On the plus side, you are your own boss so you set your own rates, you agree to the type of contract terms you want to agree to, you set your own schedule and don't need to ask for time off. You can accept or decline whatever kind of work interests you and you get to work with a large range of clients. On the negative side, you have to pay more in taxes and do your own tax and paper work, contracts, and negotiations. You need to spend a lot of time promoting your work, making sure you keep a steady work flow and managing a fruitful schedule so that you don't kill yourself trying to meet 5 jobs with the same deadline. The other downside is that there are times when work is scarce and you're constantly competing with hundreds of other artists who are all interested in the same job and want to offer lower rates than you. So I would say that it's an equal balance between advantages and disadvantages. I personally like the freedom that a freelance position allows, which is why it appeals to me for the mean time.

You appear to have a large number of creatures in your portfolio. Are they a particular favourite among the subject matter you choose to illustrate?

Creatures are definitely a favourite subject matter of mine. As a kid, my first love of art was always about the concept of creature design, with the main attraction coming from movies such as 'Labyrinth', 'Jurassic Park', 'Legend', 'Willow' and 'Star Wars', plus a handful of other sci-fi and fantasy films. I felt like, if I could grow-up and get paid to create creatures for a living, then that was what I would do.

What are some of your favourite creature designs that you have come across, whether in film or book form?

I have a large list but I'll try and keep it to the top few designs which really spark my interest. Some of the creature designs date back to my childhood, as well as the new cutting-edge digital effects being done today. I would have to say 'Predator' is one, especially the scene where you first get a chance to see his face, when all the weapons are dropped and it's a one-on-one battle in the jungle. 'Star Wars' definitely has a few of my favourites, like the 'Rancor' which was an awesome sight as a child. The 'Tauntaun' was also a childhood favourite, which is the two-legged mountable snow beast used by the rebel force on the planet Hoth. I'm just going to list a bunch of others, starting with the creature from the movie 'The Relic', the Balrog from 'Lord of the Rings', the little creature called "Fuzzball" in 'Captain Eo', 'Aliens' face huggers and the adult 'Alien' designs, the Fell Beast in 'Lord of the Rings', the Scorpio-Pede in Peter Jackson's 'King Kong', and the Gryphons from 'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe'.



Your resume details a variety of different jobs, from games companies to CD cover art. Which have been your favourite commissions and why? Some of my favourite types of jobs I've worked on recently are those that involve environment and creature design for isometric style strategy

games for the computer. The reason is that, because strategy games are much more involved and probably sell more than most other types of games, I was able to watch the designs go from concept to model to animation, and provide a little advice on the CG designs and animated movements. I have been getting more interested in illustration work as well, trying to push towards some magazine and book covers because it pays better, and getting work printed that will be seen on shelves is always very rewarding.



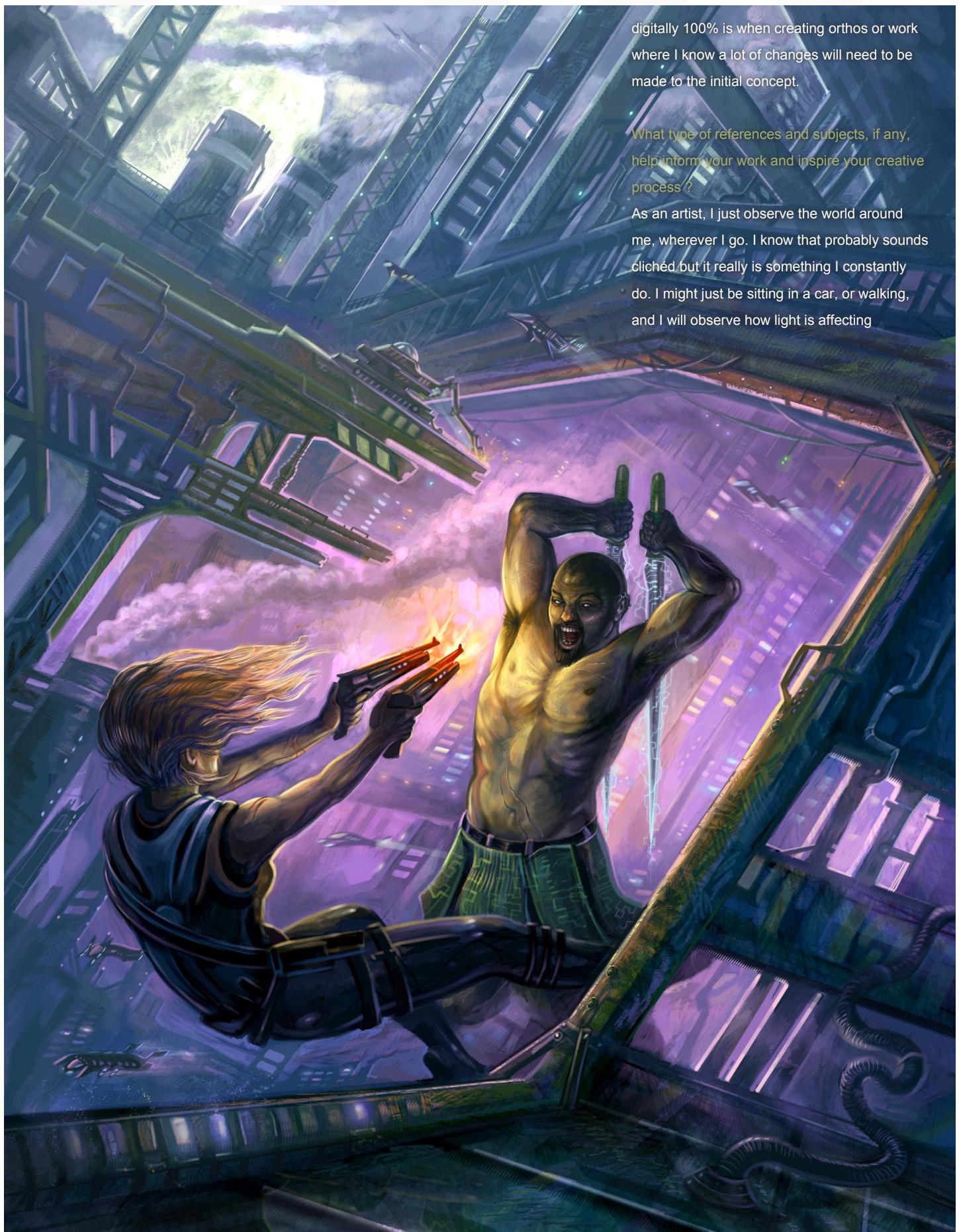
Do you play any computer games at all and, if so, which are the ones you like above all else?

I don't get chance to play too many games but I try to find the time considering it's kind of imperative to concept design. To know what modellers are capable of you need to play up-to-date games. Most recently I've been playing 'The Battle for Middle Earth' which I think has great environment and camp designs, and creature animations like the Oliphants, Trolls, Fell Beast and Balrog work is great. I still enjoy classics too, such as 'Starcraft', 'Warcraft' and 'Diablo'. Strategy games involving fantasy themes appeal to me the most when it comes to PC gaming. I try not to get too caught up in that though because those sort of games can really eat away at your time and that's not good for a freelance artist when time is money.

Do you usually start your digital works on paper and sketch out the designs first?

I will almost always sketch my designs out in pencil first and scan that in before I begin painting digitally. I feel it's nice to have a hard copy of the sketch and, even though I'm comfortable working digitally in the sketch phase, I just prefer using pencil. The only time I'll work





digitally 100% is when creating orthos or work where I know a lot of changes will need to be made to the initial concept.

What type of references and subjects, if any, help inform your work and inspire your creative process?

As an artist, I just observe the world around me, wherever I go. I know that probably sounds clichéd but it really is something I constantly do. I might just be sitting in a car, or walking, and I will observe how light is affecting

structures, or how smoke is bellowing out of factory stacks and the way the sky's colour changes throughout the day. I do keep on hand a book of animals because, being especially fond of creature design, I like to go with a more naturalistic approach with my concepts. Studying animal and human anatomy is a must for any artist. When I work in the initial sketch phase I do not use any references in order to try and maintain as much of my own style and design style as possible, before resorting to photo references. If I really feel like I lack the knowledge or information to understand a subject, such as industrial design, I will find a bunch of online photos or images in magazines to help, but I try not to let that take control of the concept nor make me a slave to the reference.

You mention the importance of studying human anatomy. Do you practice much life drawing at all, or do you rely mainly on your knowledge and references when you are drawing characters? I don't have access to life drawing classes, which are very important, so I try to shoot as references of friends and family, and myself when no one else is available. If that doesn't work, I'll find the best reference possible



online and use a combination of custom photo reference and the online photos. Other than using reference for a particular design, I study anatomy with the use of books and online websites.

Which artists do you admire and why?

I admire artists that are capable of change. When I say that, I mean an artist who can, at the flick of their wrist, change their style to meet the demands of any job or subject matter. There are a few artists out there who can imitate styles with ease, create creature and character designs, matte paintings, CG models, storyboards, cover illustrations, texture work, and fine art. Those are the kind of artists I admire. A couple of artists who really inspire me as far as style and career are concerned, are Ryan Church and Erik Tiemens, Jon

Foster, Aleksi Briclot, Keith Parkinson, Michael Whelan, Tony Diterlizzi, Jeff Easley, Brom, and Craig Mullins. A lot of those traditional painters influenced my work as a kid, and some of them have influenced me more recently in my career concerning digital painting.

On the topic of traditional art, how did you find the switch from traditional painting/drawing techniques to working digitally, and what do you see as the main pitfalls of the digital medium by comparison?

My first experiences with digital painting were back when I didn't have a Wacom tablet, so it wasn't quite as smooth as it is now, but I got by OK. Of course now, with the pressure sensitivity and brush control options that Photoshop CS offers, and Painter, it's a whole new story. It's much easier to control colours digitally, than it



is using traditional mediums, because of the amount of freedom and multiple layer abilities. Some down-falls of the digital medium come into play when working at larger scales, since you can't look at the entire image at it's full scale without zooming out. It's also not as easy to produce a natural paint effect using digital

programs unless you put a lot of effort into using

custom brushes, textures and/or space consuming programs, like Painter. Painter works great for producing a traditional effect, but it really eats away at my computer when working at the 300 resolution scale.

Are there any specific types of projects you would like to contribute towards in the future ? My main goal when I was younger, which is still my main goal now, was to work for a major film studio. I want to work for companies that have a great interest in creating the unimaginable, the strange, the eerie, the adventurous and unique stories and worlds. I would love the opportunity to work closely on film projects designing creatures and environments and watching them come to life on the big screen. I enjoy game design but, ever since I was a kid, film design has been my main aim.

Mike Corriero

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.mikecorriero.com

Or contact them:

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Interviewed By:

Rich Tilbury

Mike also takes us through the process of creating custom brushes in the

Tutorial section of this magazine...



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Justin Kaufman, aka Coro, started out dodging around the streets of El Paso with a can of spray-paint in one hand. We caught up with the now Art Director of 'Massive Black', in San Francisco, to find out all about his journey, projects and inspirations...

Coro

Hi Coro, I hope all is going well for you in San Francisco! Can you tell us a bit about your daily life there, for a start, are you a freelancer or do you do the daily 9 till 5? Hi. Yes things are going pretty well here in S.F. We are all keeping busy, that's for sure. I am a Concept Artist/2D Art Director at 'Massive Black', a high-end art outsourcing studio, which I started with a few friends back in around 2003. I live and work with my better half, Melissa, who works with me as the 2D producer there. We are basically responsible for all the concept art that goes through our studio. It can get a bit hectic at times, but I find living together we can better handle the sometimes insane projects we cycle through. We head a team of 12 fantastic guys, and have worked on around 70 game titles, as well as the occasional movie and commercial jobs, over the past few years. It's a great gig. I love the variety, and I love my boys. I feel extremely lucky to be a part of it.

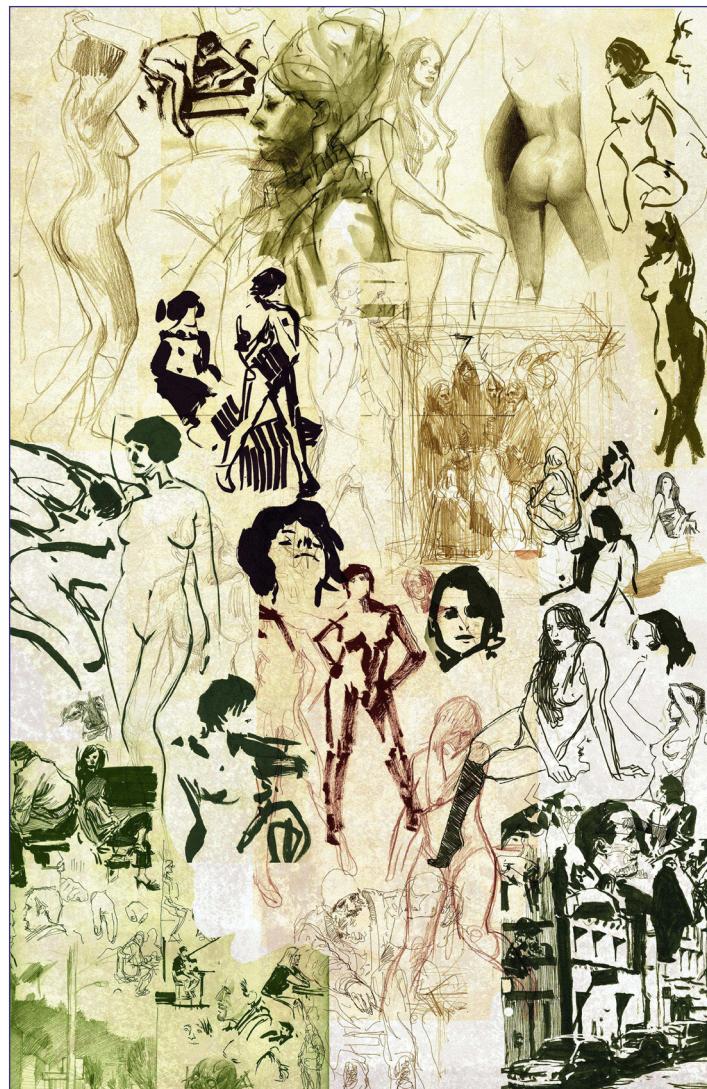
What led you into starting up 'Massive Black' with your friends? Were you working on some freelance projects and suddenly thought "there's room for something bigger here!"? We were all working at different studios at the time, but after ConceptArt.org went up, we would each



occasionally get offers for freelance work. We found it easier to pool our talents and tag-team projects, which eventually led to us getting in more and more work, to a point where we could salary ourselves and get a studio. It was a scary step, but I'm very glad to have done it. I wouldn't have done it if it wasn't for Jason Manley. He was the first to take the plunge and say "f**k it, let's do this!". He quit his job and started actively setting the business up. We started the studio on cash we'd saved up and money we were earning from projects. It was very grass roots - it still is - and I'm very proud of our independence.

Your early influences of working with spray cans and brick walls are apparent in all sections of your portfolio. Do you still ever paint this way, or do you just carry the style into your digital and illustration work?

Graffiti saved my life. If it hadn't been for spray-paint, chances are I would not be making art for a living today. It combined 2 things that appealed to me as a confused, young man; vandalism and art. I tagged and sh*t for years, but have since switched to mostly legal works, since I'm all old now [ha ha]. I try to get out at least every couple months to do it. I can't ever forget where I came from.



Do you have any "interesting stories" from your early El Paso spray paint days that you can share with our readers?

El Paso is kind of a rough place to grow up. It's located along the border of Mexico, and there is a lot of gang and drug activity there. I didn't realize this until I moved to Frisco and started talking to people about having been raised in the hood. Sh*t, I thought everywhere was like that! I like to think of growing up there as a unique sort of education. I think it has helped me immensely in the business side of things, since dealing with large companies is frighteningly similar to the politics in gang culture.

Cut-throat stuff eh? Do you find the bigger the company, the tougher the negotiations (and getting paid) can be?

I think that typically, the bigger the company, the more red tape there is, and the more chance there is for someone to screw you over to save his/her job. There seems to be less accountability with larger companies sometimes, since they can hide behind the bureaucracy of it. I will say that, in my experience, I've seen the full gambit. In the end, it all comes down to who you are working with specifically. I've had great experiences and terrible ones with the same publisher on different projects.



Where do you draw your inspiration from for your fictional characters?

I draw inspiration from all over the place. I live in downtown S.F., and am surrounded by very colourful people. I also draw from friends, family and myself. I am real big on working things from my life into my work - even if it's in small, obscure ways.

Can you give us an example of fitting your daily life into one of your works?

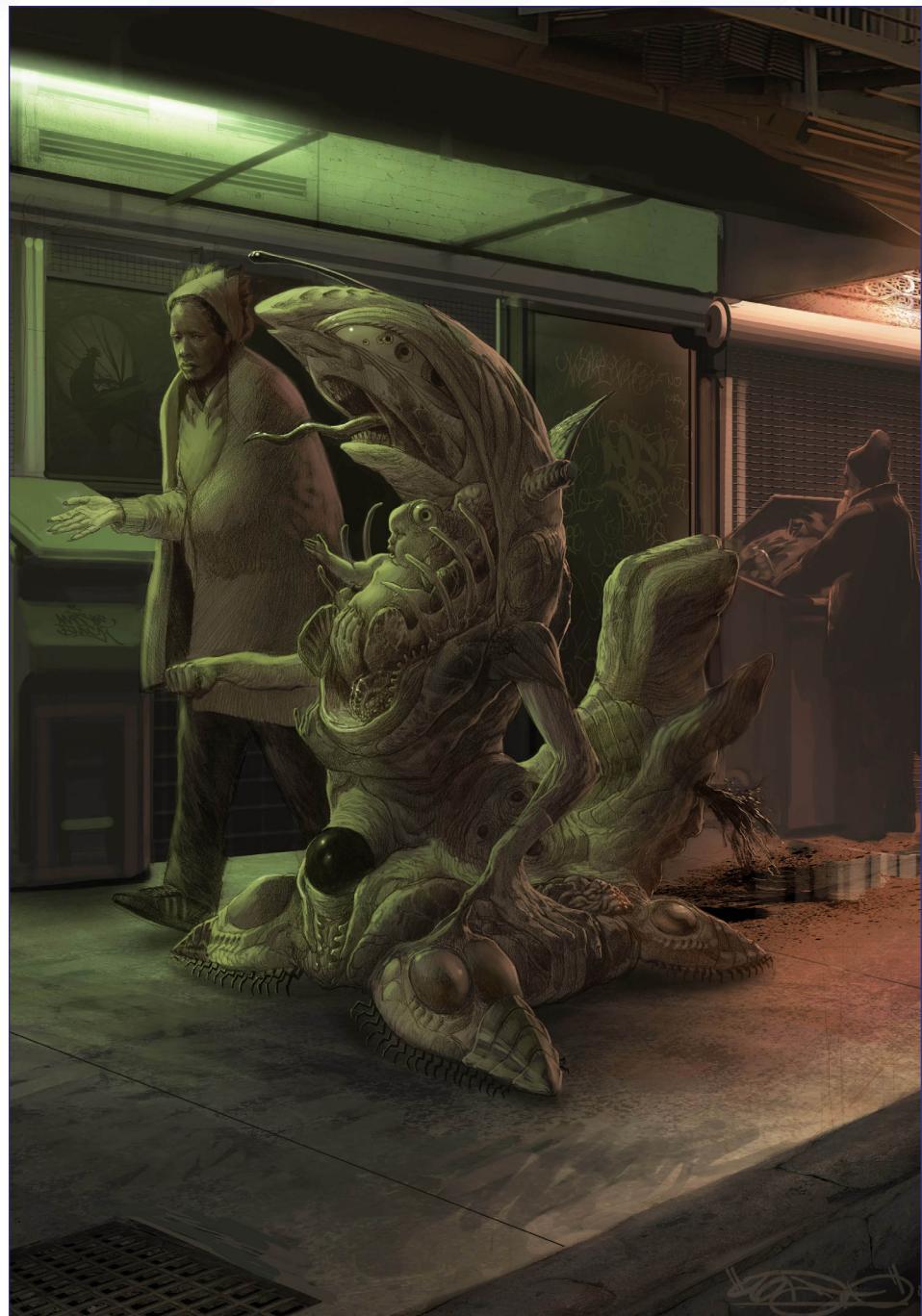
I have been working on a little personal project for a while, about the homeless. I have plenty of people that I draw inspiration from daily. This one features a lady who walks around asking for 5 cents all the time. I mean, every time you see her, even if she just asked you, she'll ask. So in this, I have her walking with her friend.

Throughout your life, is there one particular moment, or event, that really boosted things for you and your career?

Not really. I think of my career as a series of small victories. I don't think of myself as especially talented or lucky. I worked my way up from the very bottom. There are guys half my age who paint circles around me. But I'm consistent, and I'll work my ass off. And that's what's got me to a point where I can do this stuff professionally. I think if you live it, and you aren't a pompous asshole about it, people will respect that, and doors will open up. As long as you don't screw it up, you are up another rung of the ladder. That's the industry in a nutshell.

And the rung you are on now, is it the top of your ladder or do you have plans to go higher?

Well ultimately, I'd love to be handed a huge pile of money and retire, but since the reality is that there have been maybe like 5 guys who have actually retired off doing concept art, I'd like to eventually transition myself into doing more fine art related stuff. Not yet of course, because I still very much like drawing robots and monsters! Whilst I do love the challenge of commercial art, it would be nice to make work that I made all the decisions on. I love to oil paint, so I'm hoping I can do that more exclusively one of these days.



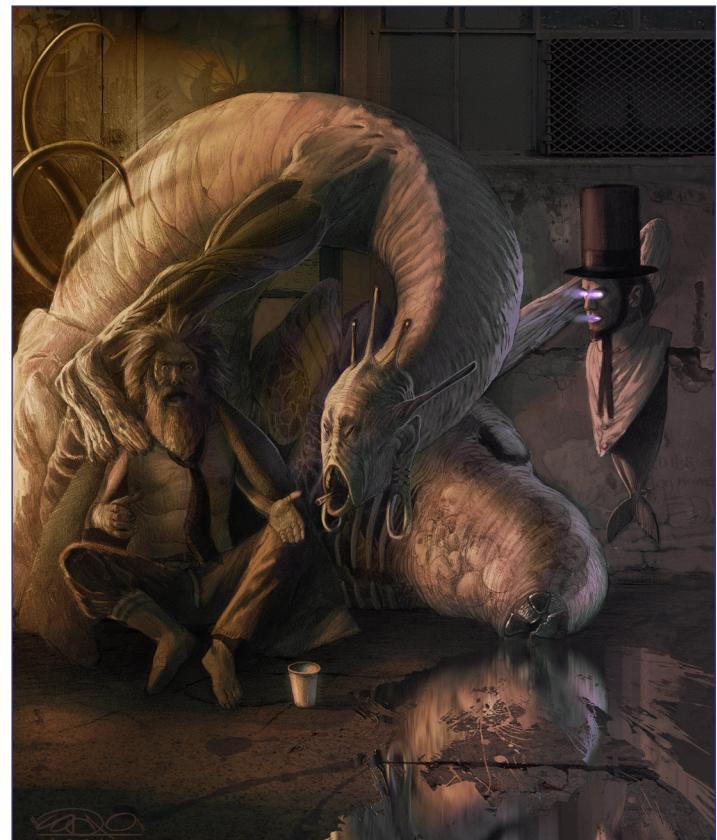
What current preferences do you have for mediums, and why?

I do about 90% of my commercial stuff digitally. I use Photoshop almost exclusively, but I also use 3DS Max and After Effects as well, from time to time. A lot of the time I will start a drawing analogue in pencil, scan it, and paint on top of it. I still feel like I can design better on paper, but you can't beat digital for "workability", and on the fly changes. I do most of my fine art work in oils. I love oil paint; it's amazing for learning colour relationships and edge stuff.

I find keeping one foot in the analogue world keeps me experimenting in my digital stuff, and vice versa. I work in other mediums from time to time too; ink and gouache being another two of my favourites.

Final question: if someone walked into your studio now, with your dream commission, what would it be?

Oh oh...let's see, hmmmm...I guess there is the whole "do whatever you want" fantasy, where a client just lets me run absolutely wild



on something...or the "polar bear in a snowstorm" assignment, where I wouldn't have to paint anything...but I guess the ULTIMATE dream gig would be to design currency. Talk about making a mark in society with your art!

Coro

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.coro36ink.com>

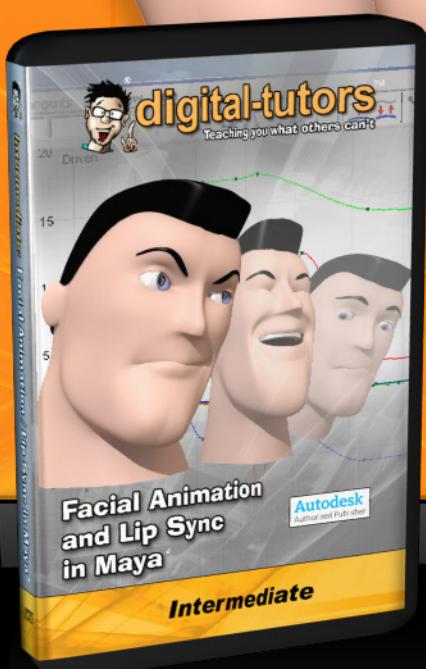
Or contact them:

coro36@yahoo.com

Interviewed By: Tom Greenway



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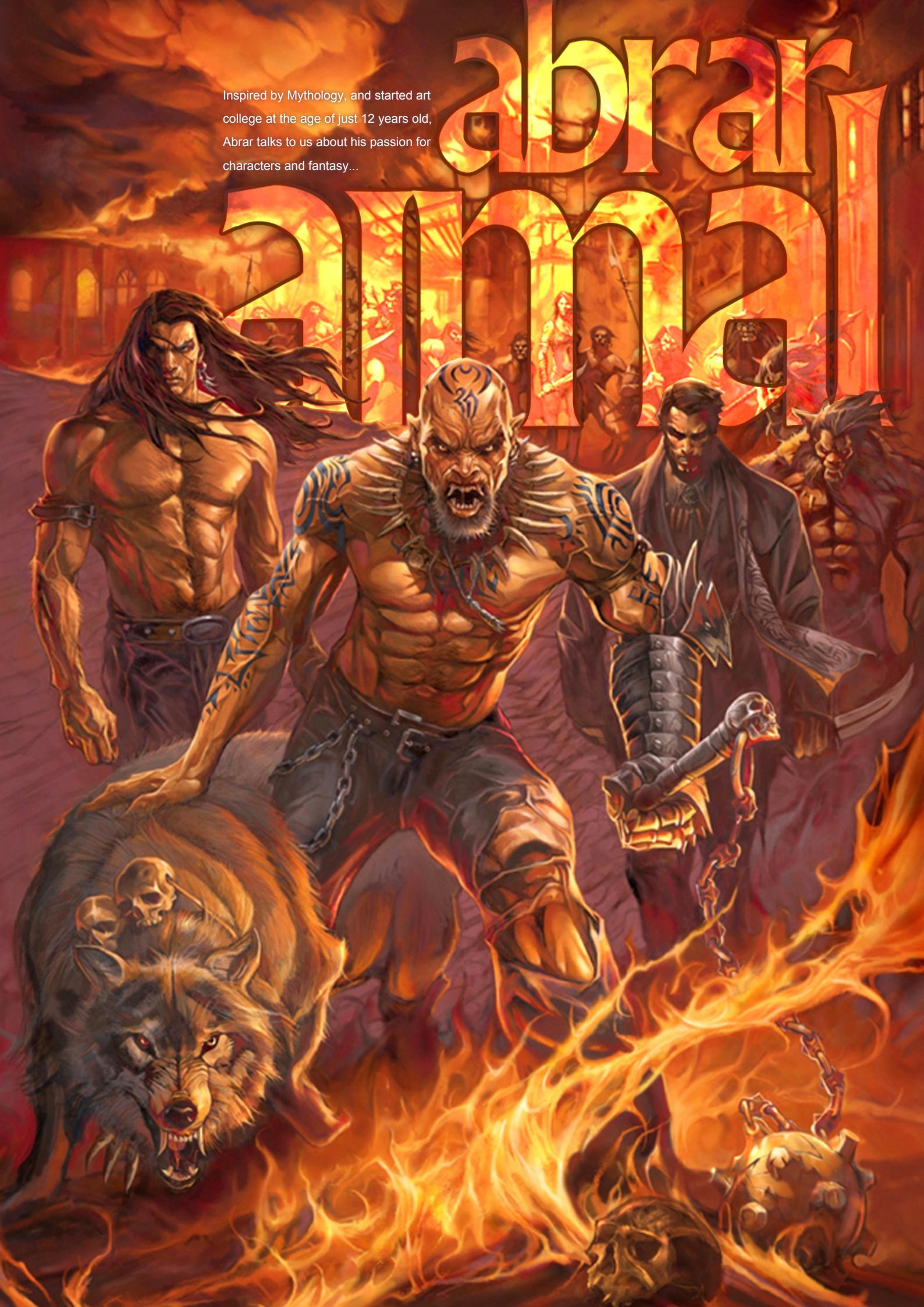
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Inspired by Mythology, and started art college at the age of just 12 years old, Abrar talks to us about his passion for characters and fantasy...

Abrar art



abrarr ajmal

Can you tell us something of your background and profession? I started my art training at an early age. I was lucky enough to be accepted at my local art college at the age of 12. My art teacher at school thought I would benefit from extra art classes and the college agreed. That's when I started an O-level art class in the evenings. During those early years I developed my drawing skills through life drawing, still-life and general landscape. I learnt human anatomy, composition and colour. I discovered lots of artists and photographers, and it was about this time that I came upon fantasy art and fell in love with the genre. I continued my education through high school and further. I started my first professional job with a small RPG gaming company. There I worked on lots of concept designs, illustrations, and covers, which gave me a great opportunity to learn the skills needed to be a commercial fantasy artist. After about three years, I decided to freelance my services and I have been very fortunate to have worked for some of the best RPG companies in the world. I had grown up with a lot of RPG games, such as 'Werewolf' from White Wolf Games, 'Warhammer' from Games Workshop, and 'Vampire'. To be working on these games is a great privilege. Currently I produce cover and interior illustrations for different RPG games. I work a lot with Sabertooth Games on their CCG, and I have a few other clients in the UK and USA.

Mythology and fantasy seem to feature heavily in your portfolio. What is it about these subjects that interests you? The fantasy genre allows me to do anything, and go anywhere, as an artist. There are no artistic boundaries, which I think is my initial attraction. There is also a huge history of literature, art and film to inspire

An Interview with *Abrar Ajmal*

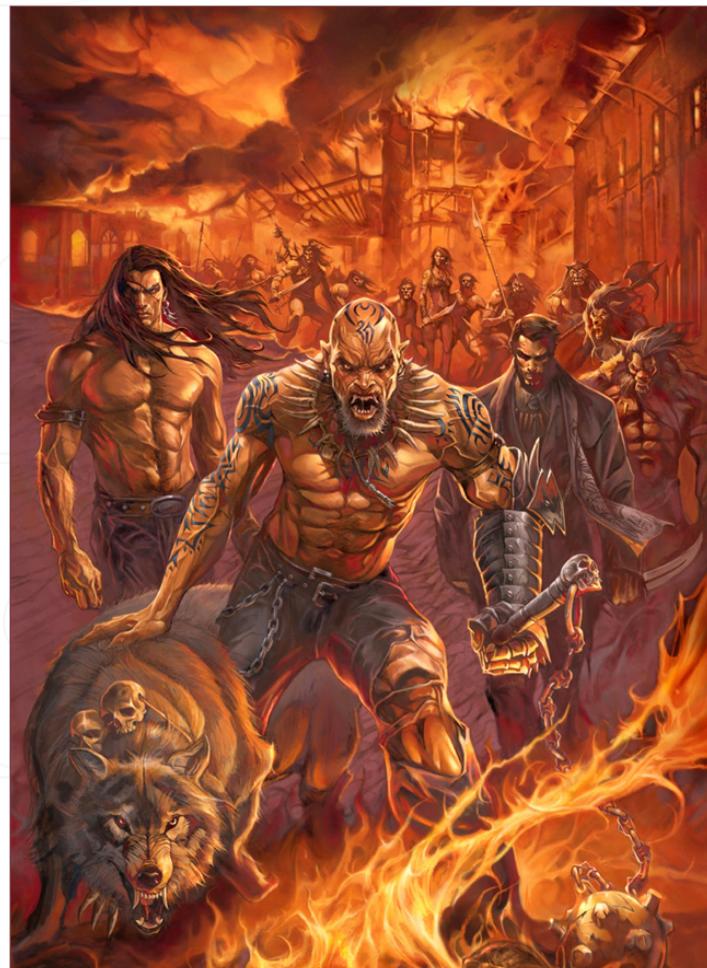


an artist. All of the 'Conan' stuff and the 'Sinbad' movies, by Harryhausen, caught my imagination when I was younger, and I guess I've never let go. Mythology has always been of great interest because there is a huge wealth of imagery within its history. When I read about all the mythological characters I get inspired; I just wish I had time to produce more of it.

Would you say you have found your niche market now, and would you be happy to continue illustrating the fantasy/RPG genre, or is there any other area you would like to explore? I would be extremely happy and grateful to continue illustrating for the fantasy/RPG industry. But as an artist, there are a lot of other things I would like to paint. I'd love to go back to more traditional painting, to use a canvas and dust of my oils, and focus on developing more artistic ideas. I agree that I think I have found a niche for myself, in regards to content and commercial appeal, although in the future I'll be working hard to try and produce more personal works.

What sources help inform your work and inspire you as an artist?

I'm a huge film "buff". I love to read, when I have the time. Tolkien's work has really inspired me over the years. His tremendous imagination has taught me there are no limits when it comes to fantasy. I would love to, someday, produce a whole series of illustrations for the 'Lord of the Rings' book. I have learnt a lot from different artists: Frank Frazetta



has been a huge influence and I adore his work; Norman Rockwell, the American Illustrator, has taught me so much from looking at his work; J. C. Leyendecker because of his fantastic style, as well as all of the great masters. I'm a huge admirer of figurative art. I like to draw and work with the human figure, and much of my work is focused on it.

Frazetta is a name that crops up a lot as an influence with numerous artists. What is it about his work that inspires you? Frank Frazetta is the master. I have learnt so much from his work. During my early teens I discovered Frazetta and instantly knew that's what I wanted to do as an artist. I love his compositions, his characters are so full of life, the dynamics and the dramas are beautifully realised, his use of colour and his interpretation of 'Conan' is iconic. His black and white illustrations are great, but it's his paintings that have had the most influence on me. A Frazetta painting is a true work of art and I try to approach my painting style in much the same way. I am not trying to imitate Frazetta but simply trying to absorb the skills and techniques he used, and produce my work.

Do you start each of your paintings with a pencil sketch? Yes, I always start my illustrations with a pencil. A pencil sketch allows me to think an idea through and work on the composition and detail. I have been known to sketch out a dozen different ideas all for one illustration. Although nowadays, it usually takes one or two detailed sketches to complete an idea. I'll then scan the sketch into Photoshop and start to paint.



Do you ever use photos as a reference for your character poses, or are they all drawn purely from your imagination? Yes, I use photos, films and models, and pretty much anything else I can get my hands on. No matter what type of reference I have, I will always use my imagination to create concepts and poses. The pose of a figure is very important to me, as that's usually my focus. A pose usually develops during sketching, or catching a frame from a movie, or sometimes just looking in the mirror. I have noticed I don't use as much reference as I used to do, which is maybe because it becomes easier the more you draw.

How much research do you do for each of your works? The level of research usually depends on the illustration. If I'm working on an existing character for a games company, then I will try to look at all references, usually photographic. For some of my personal work, I tend to start with an idea. I do use picture references when working. I find it very useful when working because it allows me to create more believable pictures. It's not about trying to copy something perfectly, but using the reference as a starting point to produce a work of fantasy.

What, if anything, would be the ideal project that you would like to collaborate on? Hmm... As I mentioned earlier, 'The Lord of the Rings' would be ideal. I remember the first time I read the novel, I just wanted to pick up my pencil and start drawing the characters and paint the battles scenes and try to capture the scope. I love the grandness of the setting. I would like to conceptualise for a movie; fantasy, sci-fi, horror - that would be great. I think working on a fantasy movie would give me the chance to create the characters, setting and mood. Then there's my love for computer games; working on a computer game from the grass routes up is also very attractive.

Do you see yourself working within the film or games industry in the future? I think I have quite a dark and moody feel to my work, which would work well in both of those industries. Of course, if the right project came along I would jump at the opportunity. It's the prospect of creating a new world, without boundaries, and developing characters that might inhabit these worlds; the protagonists and the antagonists. I hope to contact a few companies in the near future. At the moment I'm really happy to continue with my [current list of clients](#) because I'm really enjoying the work.



What, if anything, do you see as being key to a successful painting, with regards to your own work? The key for me is the drawing, but that's not the only thing that contributes to a successful painting. Colour and lighting are also important. If I manage to get everything right then I'm pretty happy. I do find it hard to know when to stop on a painting, because in theory I could just carry on forever, but as a professional artist you have deadlines and therefore I have a bit more discipline. Sometimes I will go back to a painting after publication and maybe change it or add to it. I don't think there are many pieces in my portfolio that I think are truly finished, but you have to move on to the next illustration.

Finally, what is it about fire fighting that prompted you to make two paintings based on the subject? Ah, those particular pieces were actually produced for a T-shirt company in America. They wanted a few illustrations from me on firefighters.

I had the
freedom



to come up with my own ideas. I really enjoyed doing those pieces because they are not my regular genre.

Abrar Ajmal

For more work by this artist please visit: www.aaiillustrations.com

Or contact them:

abrар.ajmal@ntiworld.com

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MY BABY GONE BAD

a Thrilling Love Triangle

by Juno Black

Hoang currently works at Electronic Arts, working on next generation projects. A true veteran of the industry, Hoang has worked on past projects including; 'Tiger Woods Golf', 'James Bond: From Russia with Love' and 'The GodFather'...

THE BIG BLACK HUSH

A Bizarre Crime novel

by Kai Devin

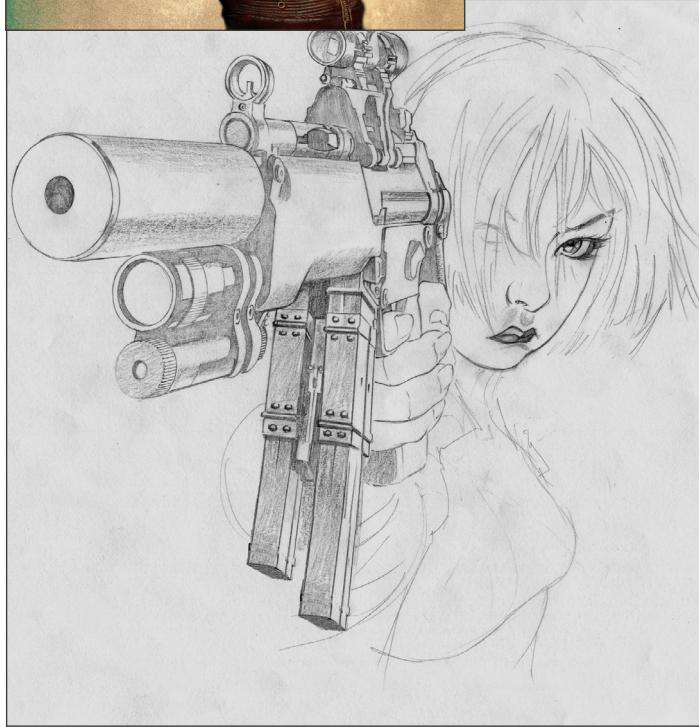
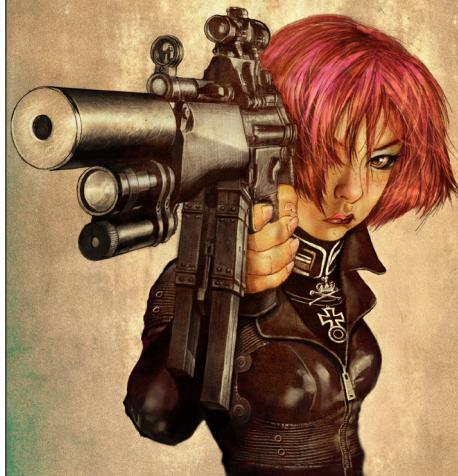
ONE BILLION BULLETS

Amazing Mystery Novel

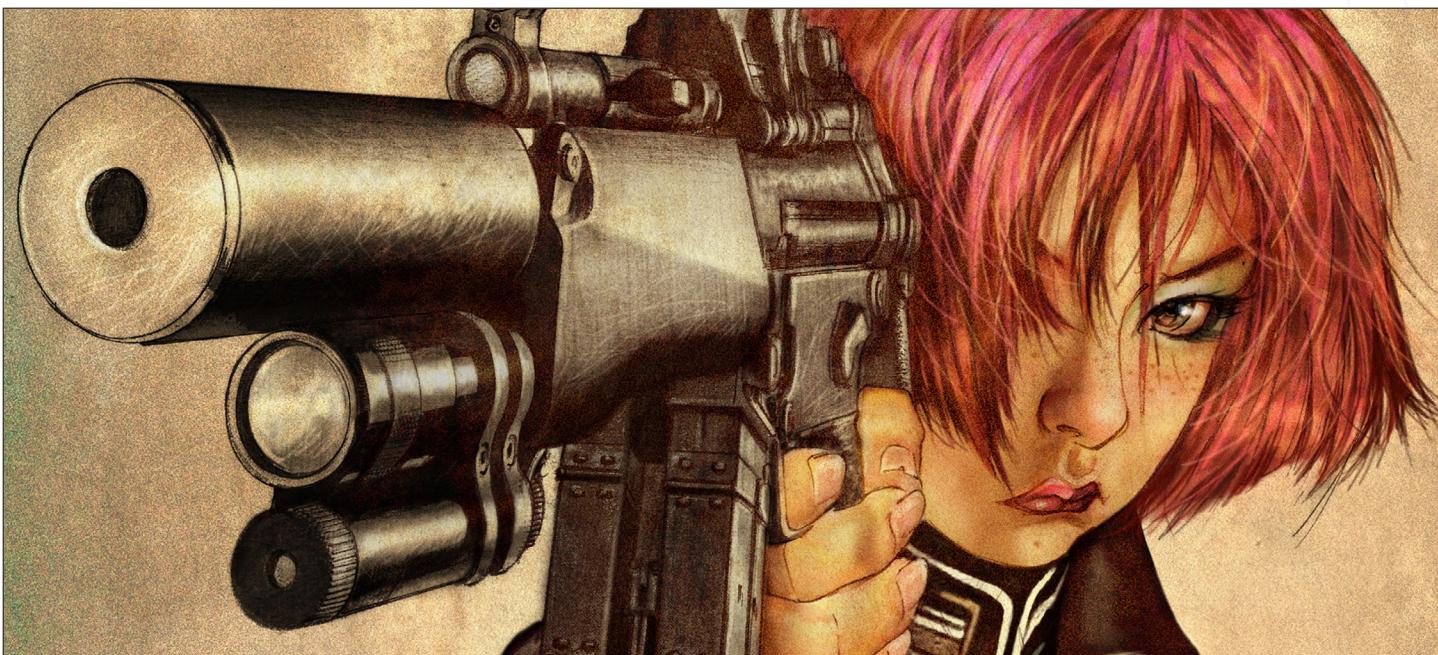
by Thai Dagan

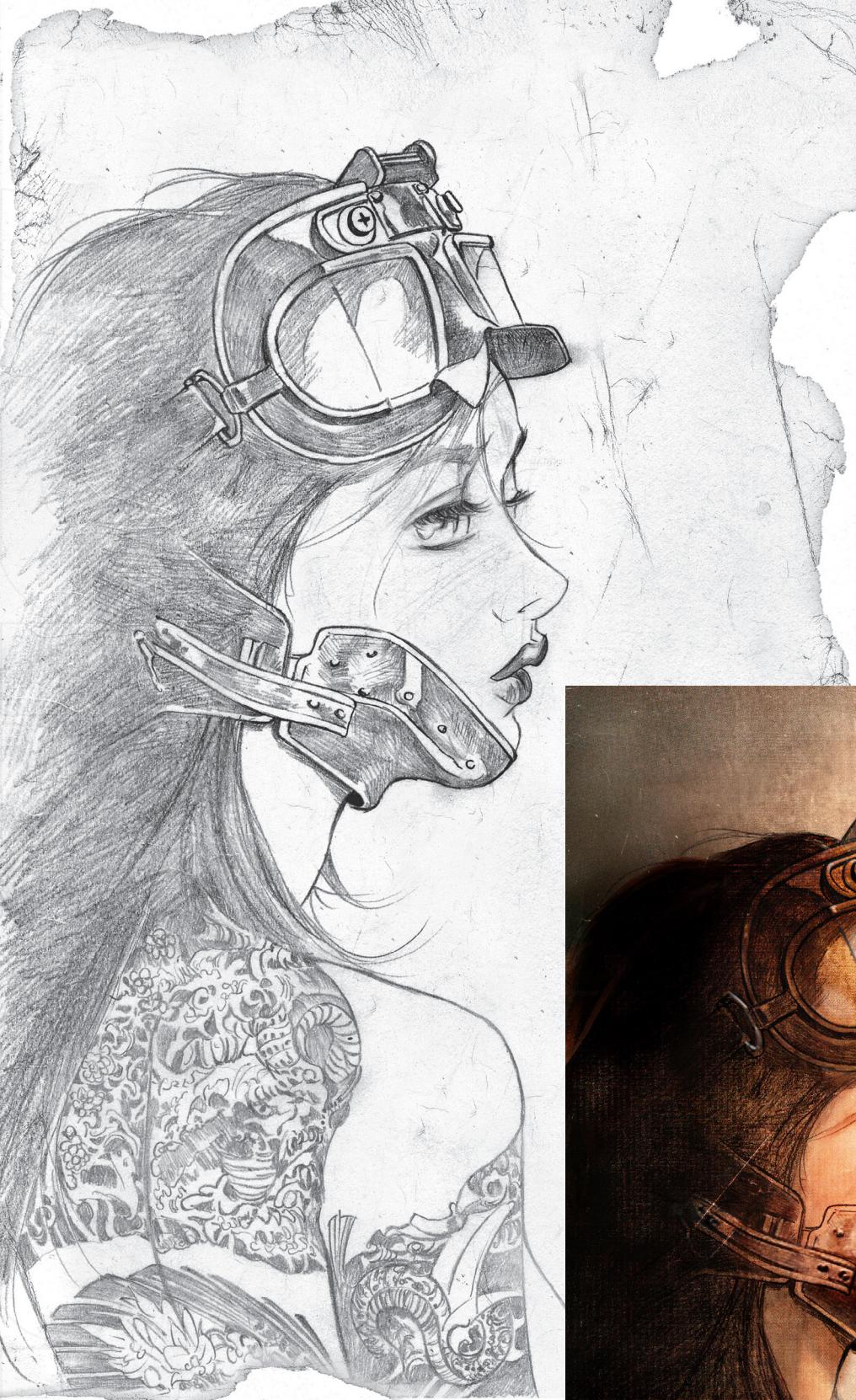
Hoang Nguyen

Hello Hoang, thank you for talking to us. Firstly, please can you tell us about yourself; your age, location, current projects, etc.? This question always baffles me - I never know what to say. It's like, "Hello World! Here I am!"... I currently reside in California, USA, with one wife and two hyperactive boys, and am growing old by the minute. I'm employed by Electronic Arts, working on a next generation project (it's a secret!). Past projects that I've worked on include; 'Tiger Woods Golf', 'James Bond: From Russia with Love', 'GodFather', and I am currently working on a secret project. Before coming to EA, I was at Namco working as a lead Artist/Art Director on a game called 'Dead to Rights'. That was the highlight of my career, since I helped create a new IP for Namco. I have also worked at Universal Studio (Xena) and Bethesda Softworks ('Daggerfall', the elder scroll series). Before joining the games industry, I also created works for Marvel, DC, Image and Dark Horse Comic companies.



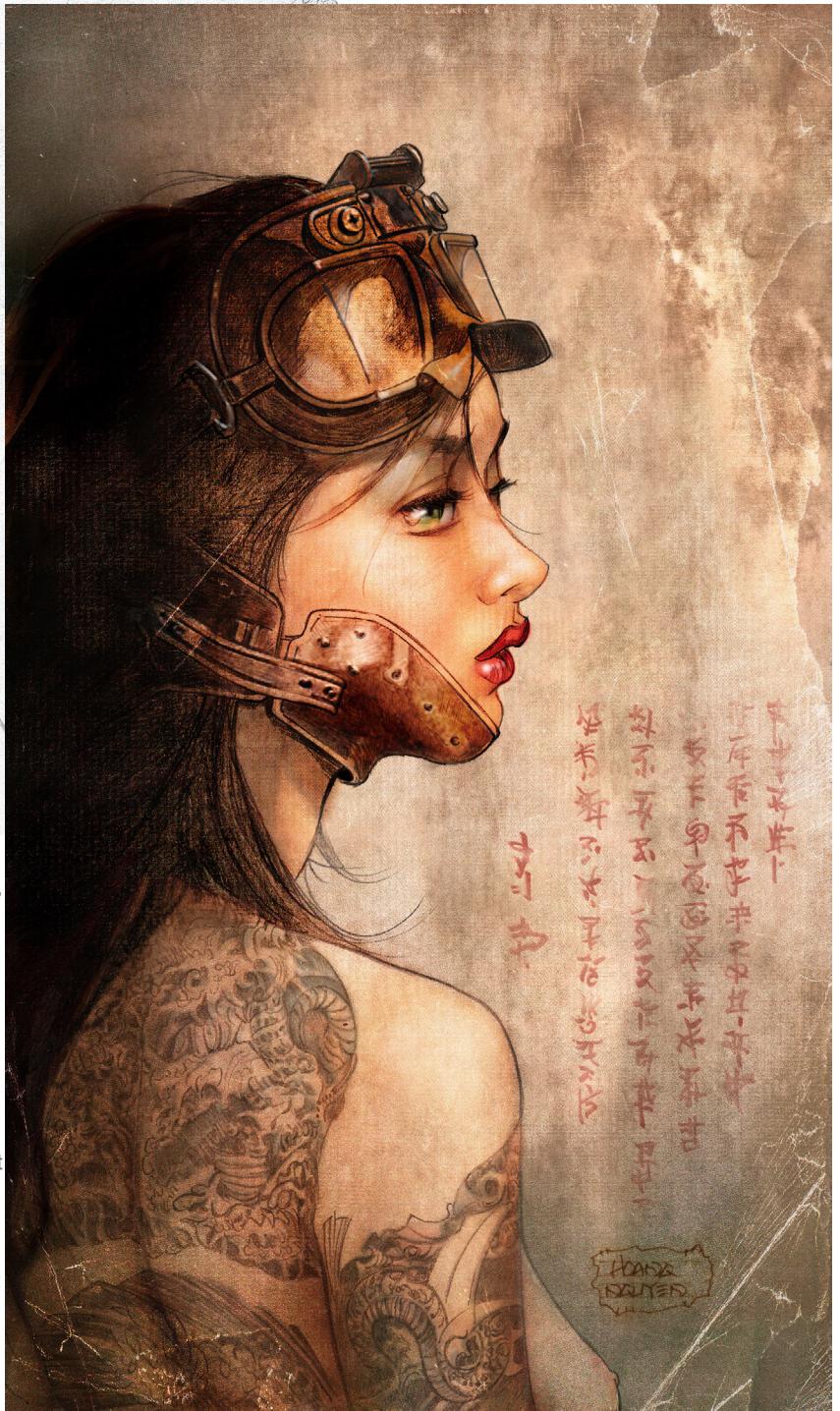
What first inspired you to take up digital art, and why was this? I originally trained as a Fine Artist, but changed courses during my days at college, and instead majored in Illustration. Back in the day (I'm an old man now, if you haven't already guessed), digital art hadn't yet evolved - it was just starting to. I can remember 'Mac Paint' and 'Mac Draw', which were pretty crude programs, but were a lot of fun all the same, and that was as far as I got in digital art at that time. I went on to join the comic industry, working for the likes of Marvel, DC, Image and Dark Horse Comics. Years later, when I joined a game company, is when I started along the path of digital art. At first, I didn't care for it much, because it wasn't tangible. I couldn't just show it to anyone - I'd have to drag them over to my monitor, or a laptop, but it gradually grew on me. Now I just can't live without it! The ability to modify





attention in class. Everything they taught is still relevant even to this day, and I still find myself applying all the techniques that I've learnt in my works.

Your portfolio [www.liquidbrush.com] shows great variety, however there are some very strong themes present that appear to link your 2D artworks. For example, there are military, sexual, war and punishment references, which symbolize a strong sense of "good verses evil". Why do you think these key elements inspire the majority of your artworks? I was born and raised during the Vietnam War, and my father was in the Special Forces, fighting against Communism. This therefore really influences my artworks. When I was in high school, most of my paintings were very violent, depicting gruesome



an image so quickly was just not possible by traditional means, especially when competition was so fierce. It was a choice of evolving with the times, or getting left behind!

What was it about Fine Art that wasn't right for you? Was it hard to make the leap from Fine Art to Illustration at such an early stage in your education? Do you ever look back and wonder, what if...? At the time, it was just too boring for me; Art History was the final straw! All I wanted was to paint sci-fi and fantasy art, but they kept making me paint still-lives and draw all these naked people: EWWW! So I switched major and went into Illustration. Looking back, I wished I'd have paid more

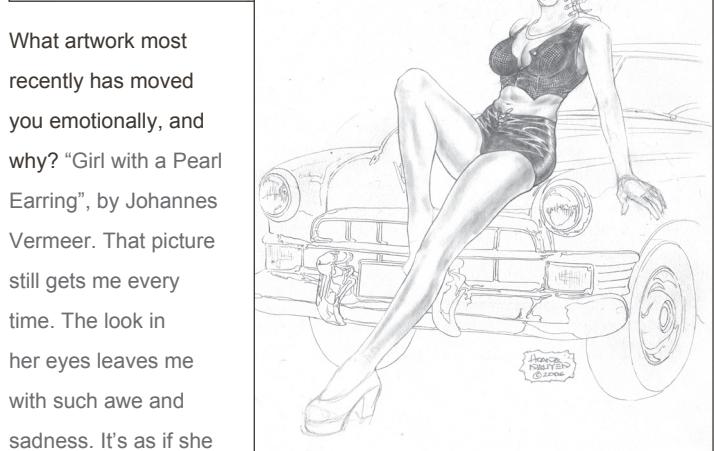
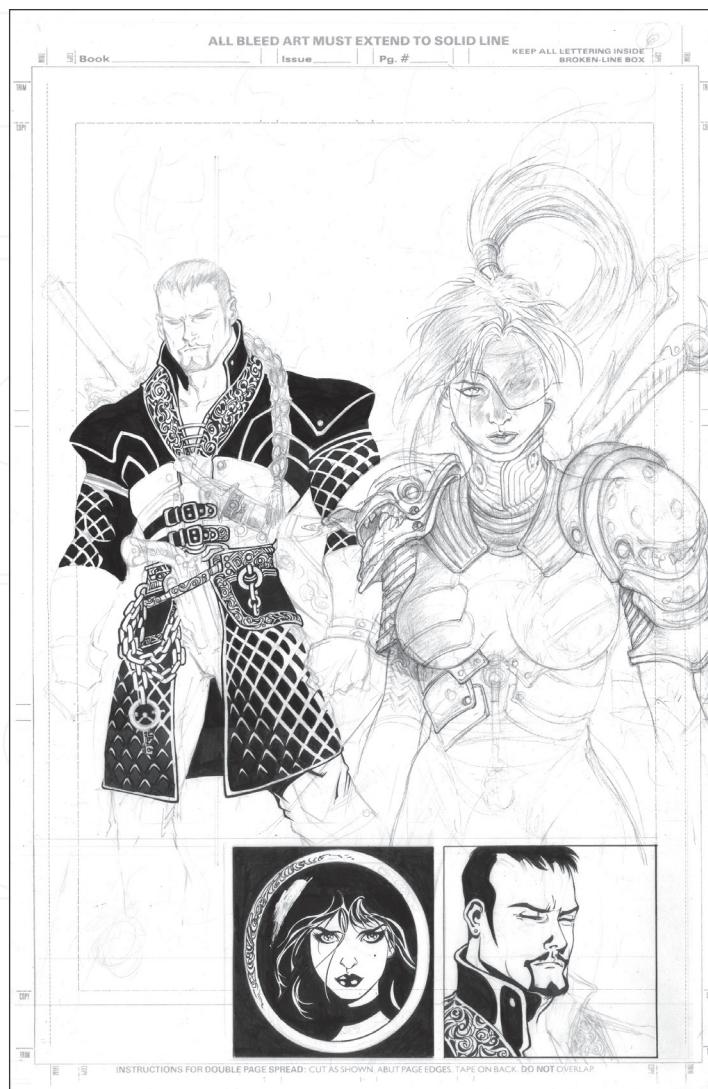


and bloody battle scenes. Nowadays, I prefer to paint subjects that move me emotionally, and I believe that my two sons have a big impact on how I now view the world.

What have your sons taught you about the world today? That everything can be new again, even the mundane stuff. Seeing things through their eyes has been a blessing for me. To them, the world is waiting to be discovered!

You have had a lot of success with your artwork "Memories Lost" [also featured in the Gallery section of 2DArtist Magazine #010]. What do you think is the key to the success of this piece?

I think when an artwork moves you, emotionally or mentally, it leaves an impression. It is all about how the viewer perceives the image and what they take away from it. Sometimes, certain elements can trigger a "thing" from their past or their present. In this particular piece, the subject matter is something that we all can relate to. This painting deals with memories of the past, which could be anything; love, loss, pain, happiness, time, distant memories, etc.



What artwork most recently has moved you emotionally, and why? "Girl with a Pearl Earring", by Johannes Vermeer. That picture still gets me every time. The look in her eyes leaves me with such awe and sadness. It's as if she wants to tell you something, but cannot. To me, the eyes hold so many emotions that one can tell or sense something just by looking at them.

There is a beautiful canvas texture which can be seen in some of your artworks, for example "Memories Lost", "Hard Boiled to the Max", "Eternal Sorrow", etc. Can you talk us through the secret of how you create this? There aren't really any secrets about my processes. Mostly, the subject matter dictates how I approach a painting. For example, "Hardboiled" was



a throw-back to the days of 'Pulp' magazine. I wanted to create something that resembled those days, using the same layout and over-the-top descriptions, and so I wanted the background to reflect that. I used multiple texture layers to achieve this. I usually paint the picture first and then add layers to enhance the painting, but

mostly it's simply a process of trial and error. Please can you tell us a little about your book, "Hard Boiled to the Max Sketchbook"? The book is mainly for myself. It was a chance for me to compile all of the work that I had been working on for many years. I have so many stories and ideas that I wanted to do, but I lack the discipline

to finish them all. Mostly, it's an opportunity to sharpen my skills. I spend most of my days creating 3D works and, when I have some free time, I like to keep up with my 2D. You can read more about the making of the book on my blog: http://liquidbrush.blogspot.com/2006/08/sketchbook-part3_14.html.

Now that you have compiled all of your past artworks in your book, what is your next personal project? Volume 2! I have so many works that it would take at least four volumes to complete, and that's only the stuff worth printing (the rest is crap). But what I really want to do is to work on my painting and concentrate on subject matters that appeal to me. I'm only averaging 2 to 3 personal paintings a year and am hoping to increase that. I usually work on 3 or 4 different paintings at any given time and it depends on my mood or inspiration as to what dictates which paintings get finished.

That's great, I wish you the very best of luck with Volume 2 of your book, and for the future. I will leave you to continue discovering the world with your sons – I am sure they have lots more to teach you!

Thank you, the pleasure was all mine.

Hoang Nguyen

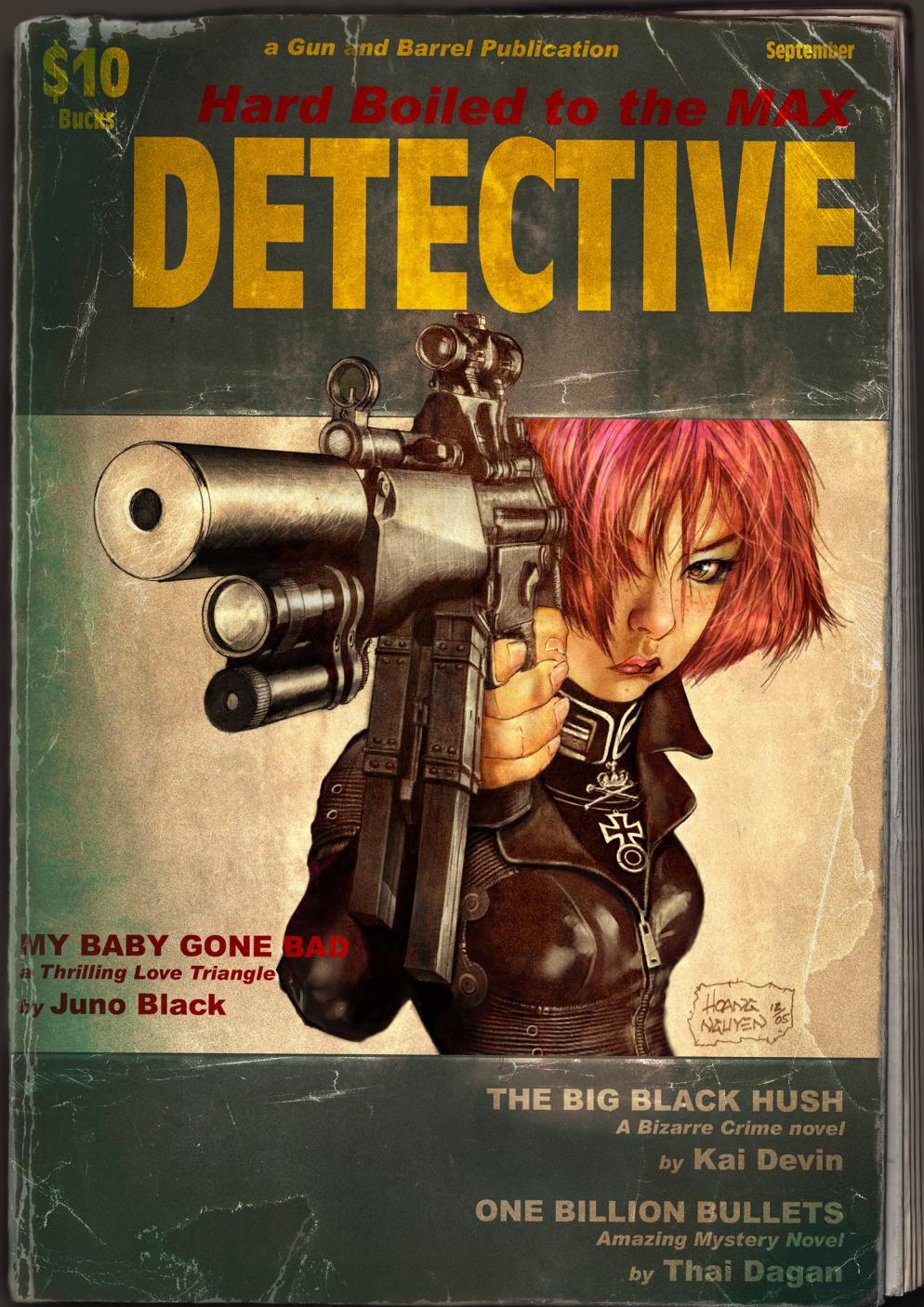
For more work by this artist please visit:

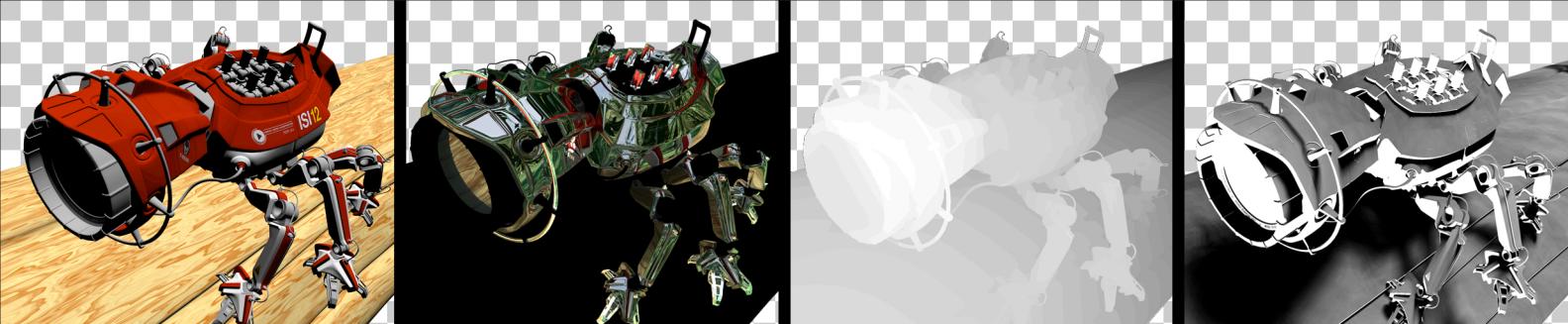
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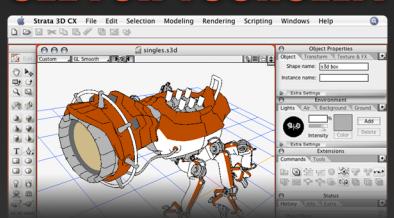
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Ever wanted to go freelance? Ever wondered where to start? Ever thought about how you would cope once you had taken that first step? Kristen Fischer isn't out to change the world, she just wants people to follow their creative dreams, and to know that it's OK to experience a few ups and downs along the way. That's what prompted Kristen, 28, to write her debut book "Creatively Self-Employed: How Writers and Artists Deal with Career Ups and Downs". The collection of anecdotes, from more than 65 creatives, covers everything from dealing with rejection and loneliness to marketing the "right-brained" way. For 3 months, Kristen has shared her, and others', experiences from the world of Creative Self-employment. This month: Good Business: How Creatives Can Live Off Their Talents

Creatively self-employed

Creatively self-employed

One of the most important things to me when I was writing Creatively Self-Employed: How Writers and Artists Deal with Career Ups and Downs was to include a chapter on business in general. Specifically, I wanted to give creatives tips on how to run their businesses. I stressed throughout the book that there was no one answer or tip that would work for all creatives; rather, they could get ideas from listening to others. So for the third installment in this publication, I'm going to share with you some practical business advice. I feel that many creatives need this information, because many think they can get by on their creative talents alone. Not if they want to run a business. Many creatives panic when they hear that. That's when I remind them that if, for example, they're not good at sales or accounting, they can do either of the following: learn how to do it themselves via books and websites, or hire someone out to do it. So keep in mind that your creative business is not just about painting canvases. You're going to want to make rent off of it, so creating a website to advertise your paintings, for example, is vital. Not a webmaster? Not a problem! There are others out there that can help!

Marketing Your Biz

Ilese Benun, a New Jersey-based marketing consultant and author says there are plenty of tools available to properly market and run your business. According to Benun, there are three ways the creatively self-employed can effectively and affordably market themselves:



Expand your universe with networking

"You never know who will need what when," says Benun, who encourages creatives to find one or two groups where prospects gather. "Get involved and let them get to know you over time. Extend your hand and introduce yourself. Contribute to your community. Join the board of your local library or volunteer to organize a bake sale at a local school. Be visible."

Keep in touch regularly

"The only way to stay in touch with everyone who's expressed interest in your work is with a regular marketing vehicle—what I call a 'loop'—something you do like clockwork, quarterly or even monthly, so you don't have to reinvent the marketing wheel each time," she says. Sending out a simple e-mail newsletter is the easiest and least expensive loop. (Don't worry, she adds, e-mail marketing is not the same thing as spam.) E-mail is one of the best and least expensive ways to keep in touch with—and keep your name in front of—those with whom you have (or would like to have) a working partnership. This includes past, current and possibly future customers, as well as vendors and colleagues and even friends and family. These people want to hear from you. Let them.

Launch a website

"These days, it's just plain unprofessional to say, 'I don't have a website,'" says Benun. It's almost like saying you don't have an answering machine, e-mail or voicemail. There's really no excuse. At the very least, you should have a one-page site with a blurb about your work and contact information. Later, you can develop a more multifaceted website with examples of your work, descriptions of the various services you offer and glowing testimonials from clients.



Getting it in Writing

Cat Morley, a designer and project manager based in Thailand, runs www.creativelatitude.com and is the owner Katzi Design. She says contracts are a way of life, and a necessary business practice for creatives. "When I was starting out, I wasn't as skilled in designer-client communication. As a result, there were some snafus," she recalls. "But, after you've wasted your time because you didn't cover your hind quarter, you quickly search out ways to combat the problem."

Managing Money

A lot of creatives know how to stockpile money for the lean months. They also realize the joy of large cheques because, unlike for most people, the self-employed creative knows that the money doesn't come regularly—but when a good project pays off, boy, does it pay. Jackie Alpers, a fine art photographer and photo editor (www.jackiealpers.com), used to struggle with money. But her challenges came when she finally got the cheque: what to do, what to do? "When a big check came in I would want to spend it all right away. Then in couple of months I would be worried about paying my bills," says Alpers. She's learned some restraint and budgeting techniques since the days of her newfound love of lump sums, but what's hardest is to have faith that the next cheque will arrive. "I've also learned not to worry about where the next cheque is going to come from," says Alpers, whose clients include Simon and Schuster, Glamour magazine and Canyon Ranch resort. "There's an unlimited source of income out there, and worrying isn't productive." Of course it takes time to get to a well-established place with your creative business where you are getting regular work and not fretting about making enough money.



It also takes time to learn how to manage your finances as a self-employed individual. It's completely okay for these things to take a while. Hopefully, these stories have given you useful tips for making your business work out for the best. Because it is a business, and you'll have to stay professional if you want to live off your talents. Another tip? Buy the book at www.creativelyselfemployed.com to learn more!

Kristen Fischer

is a freelance writer living in New Jersey. Her book,

Creatively Self-Employed

How Writers and Artists Deal with Career Ups and Downs can be purchased at

www.creativelyselfemployed.com



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Over the last year, 2DArtist
has been asking industry professionals

one important question:

*"What one piece of
advice would you
give to an aspiring
Artist?"*

With a new year, and a
fresh start, here are the
answers...

ADVICE FOR ASPIRING ARTISTS

Advice for Aspiring Artists

Frederic St. Arnaud

Lead Matte Painter at Digital Dimension, Canada

"Go with your passions, never stop drawing and make good contacts in the industry."

Stephane Belin

Art Director, France

"I think most beginners really have strong models that they forcefully try to mimic. It's a big mistake that I've been guilty of myself! But that's OK as it's part of the normal evolution of an artist. But even if it's a good thing to learn from experienced artists, I think it's really important to find, as soon as possible, what really is your thing, whether it's scenery, characters, abstract, or whatever you feel the best for you. You have to develop your own vision and always keep a critical eye over your work. It's also essential to learn to walk before running. Learn your basics: composition, perspective, and an understanding of colour is an essential foundation. It takes time and work to master - there's no short-cut for that."



Marc Simonetti

Freelance Artist, France

"I would give one that is truly helpful: when making a piece of art, always consider it in its wholeness. If you begin by making very small details, when the other parts are not even started, you will certainly lose strength and efficiency."

Tim Warrick

Matte Painter & Concept Artist, Intelligent Creatures, Toronto, Canada

"There's so much out there for you to educate yourself; for me, one of the greatest things was the Gnomon training DVDs. They have a couple of matte painting ones and lots of concept titles and a ton of 3D stuff - you could get away with not going to college at all! I wouldn't recommend that, because college offers such great opportunities; meeting other people etc., but I'm just saying it's definitely an amazing supplement for going to school. Even before college, you see high school kids now posting on these forums and getting training DVDs, and I don't know if they realise how much of a leg up they are actually getting."



Laith Bahrani

Laith Bahrani

Founder and Artist, Monkeehub

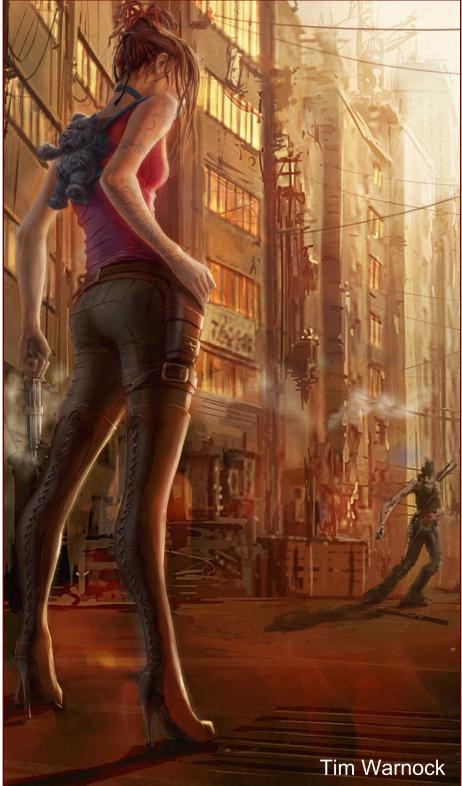
The shortest answer on record:

"Stay off my turf!"

Martin Abel

Freelance Artist, Australia

"Advice? Go and get your clients! You can't sit around waiting for them to come to you, at least not when you're first starting out. My plan of



Tim Warnock



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attack was this: create a professional website portfolio (preferably .com or .net, etc.); create a list of ALL the possible magazines, companies and places you would LOVE to work for and could see your work actually being used; find contact emails for all said companies, and:

EMAIL, EMAIL, EMAIL. I cannot stress this enough; the more emails you send to different potential clients, the better. Only 3 out of 10 may actually contact you back, and only 1 or 2 may offer you some work if you are lucky! So, get the computer booted up!"

Matt Dixon

Lead artist, Eurocom Entertainment Software,
UK

"Turn off the Internet and get to work! Seriously, developing self-discipline is very important, and I know a lot of artists who are easily distracted. Don't let the Internet, TV, video games and all that other fluff get in the way of your artwork. Practice is the best way to improve, so if you haven't drawn today, then why not? Get to it!"

Matt Dixon



Patrick Jensen

**Kerim Beyit**

Freelance Artist

"I am not a big shot in this industry, but if you want advice from a rookie, I can tell you one thing: keep your eyes open. The most important thing that a concept artist needs is a visual library. If you don't add new pieces to this library, you may find yourself repeating the same lines over and over again. However, if you have an extensive library, you can create something new by blending the different objects you see in your everyday surroundings with those in your imagination. For example, when I'm on my way to or from work, I always observe the environment and absorb everything. I observe the formation of the fog or lights, and notice the trees or the hair on the person who's sitting next to me. If you can memorise these kinds of little things, reflecting them on paper is just a matter of practice."

Patrick Jensen

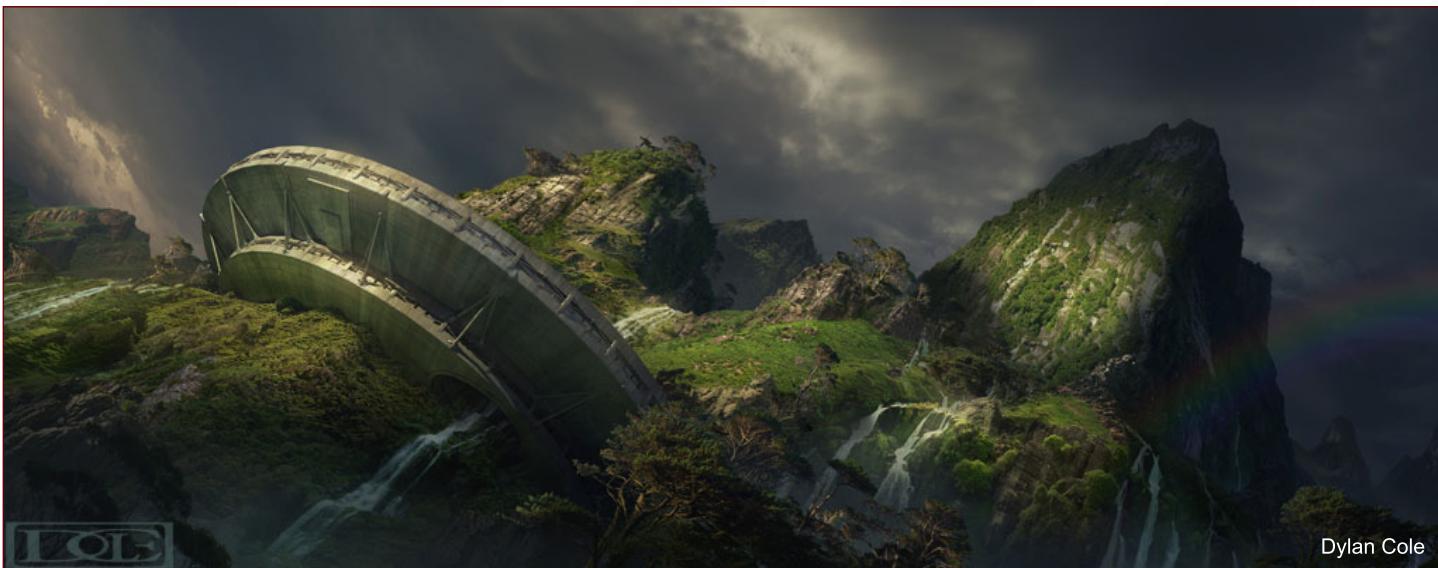
Matte Painter & Digital Artist

The longest answer on record:

First, an analogy: I grew up playing the piano, and thought I'd make it my profession. In high school though, when I began taking a few art



Kerim Beyit



Dylan Cole



Jean-Sebastien Rossbac

classes, I started to realise I was beginning to peak on the piano side of things, and soon put more interest into the visual arts rather than the performing arts. Key word being "arts" - so you can see the connection very soon. My great piano teacher asked me one day, and was smart enough to wait until I could really understand it, but she asked, "What makes a musician a musician?" I tried a few answers, but never really hit it; perhaps one that plays an instrument, or one that studies music,

but I was wrong. My teacher put it simply, "To be a musician, you need two things: the first is technique, and the second is musicality" (which can be substituted for feeling, heart, expression, or those other great intangible words). If you only have technique, you're merely playing the piano or playing that instrument. If you only have expression, you are uncontrollable and lost. Having both, you become a musician. It is a balance. Many great people out there only have one side of the coin, and usually it's the technique side of things because that's easier to grasp. So in more discussions with my teacher, I found the musicality side to be like this: if you're playing Beethoven, then first try and learn what he was trying to have the music sound like, through notations, phrases, louder, softer, etc. Secondly, when others and your teacher hear you play, listen to what they say and react to so you can make things sound better than what you can hear while playing. Thirdly, try, learn, and especially feel how you, yourself, want the music to flow and feel. Lastly, and most importantly, take all these factors - the source, Beethoven, the audience and instructors, and yourself - and then decide how to finally perform the music. When performing such music, you need the technique there in order to perform the music at its best potential. It took me years to realise that... and even a few more years to finally realise that I had been translating my music instruction over to the visual arts. So here, I'll try and connect the dots. You're wondering about painting, and more specifically, painting digitally. Think of that as an instrument for this example; Photoshop being a flute, Painter being a Saxophone, and MSPaint being the sound of a squirrel running into a garbage can. They are tools for your expression. Now, the expression - the art - or you can even say "concept", has many factors. You could have great art skills, even drawing, and just never picked up a flute before. So, it all depends. But let's see... Like Beethoven, you can study great work out there. And here's the first valuable exercise you can try: find an image on the Internet; put it into Photoshop, or on your second monitor (opening it up with Microsoft Image and Fax Viewer or something); create a document in your paint



Vinegar

program with the same proportions; then try and replicate the image. If your source image is in Photoshop, you can be tempted to colour pick colours straight from the image itself (this has minor, pros and cons to it, but please don't think you are cheating, because that leads to other problems). Try copying it both ways, with colour picking, and try to discover the colours on your own. But most importantly, when doing a copy of a work out there, try and focus on how the original artist went about creating it - think about this for a second. You really have no idea how they did it because you are looking at a final image. So what does that force you to do? It makes you try and figure out not only how they did it, but how you yourself can approach it right now and get a similar result - a result you were inspired by in the first place. This approach that you are taking could be a technique you learn to apply on future paintings. As you will see, copying a work like this is very valuable (and do try various approaches). For example, you could try painting the end result right away - no layering, no special nothing, just one brush - going for the precise finished colour for that pixel and, "bam", it will eventually be there. Or, you could think about painting the background first, then the next layer, then the next, till you're at the front of the image. Or, you could

rough everything in broadly, and slowly refine the whole image, always working around until it's finally there. Or, this or that techniques are limitless! Next thing you could do is try and learn their techniques... there are tons of tutorials out there that teach you how to paint a tree like this guy, a spaceship by this girl, a "whatever". By that last example, you will understand that just you putting that pen or brush down and painting, you are learning what works, what doesn't, as you go about whatever you're working on. A technique of someone else might not be the best for you, so remember that. Developing technique takes practice, simple as that, and

once you start figuring things out, things get quicker. So we talked about working with other artists out there, finding images that move you and trying to copy and learn from them. You can then learn from others, whether at school or on forums... Now a quick thing on forums: like music, a person's opinion is just that, something you look at, turn around, analyse, and decide to use or throw away. Just try to learn from all these sources the most you can. Books: you can try gallery-type books, graphic novels, comic books, whatever sparks your fancy. Analyse the work - copy it if you want. Most importantly, ask yourself, why do I like this image? What is



Matt Haley

making this image work? Pause a DVD frame if you like a shot and ask the same things; think about composition, lighting, palette, colour, angles, shapes, contrast - that's the juicy stuff that can then help your paintings. Not saying "woah, that's a cool character with a double barrelled plasma gun and flapping orange hair". No! Look at it and say "dang, look at how the curve of the arm intersects the straight line of the body; the contrasting shapes of how the gun is silhouetted against the dark shape of the cape; the brushwork on the armour is different than the shoes". That will help you! Ultimately, it's your artistic eye that you're training. Just like you use the technique and your musical ear to take all the outside and inside factors to produce great music, you must train your artistic eye, with outside sources and within, to express what you want, using the tools that you choose with the techniques to do it with. Practice, learn, listen, watch, and ask questions! Search, respond, set goals, take baby steps, fail, don't be afraid to wipe the canvas clean and start over, do your best, and remember to have fun. Best of luck to you!"

Dylan Cole

Matte Painter

"Well, having a good portfolio is the first thing necessary. Try to have a wide variety in your work so you aren't pigeon-holed as the "desert dude" or "greenery girl", or whatever. Be critical of yourself. Just because your mum loves it, doesn't mean it should be in your portfolio. A portfolio of five strong pieces is always better than a portfolio of five strong pieces with two "okay" ones. The two okay pieces will bring down the strong ones. Send out as many portfolios as possible. Even better is to have a website and email links to anyone you can think of. And a word on websites: don't have some convoluted flash site that you need sit through intros and push 5 buttons before you can see a piece of art. A simple HTML site will do just fine. Be active on the forums; anything that will get your name and work noticed. If you have the talent it can happen."

Sherbetcibot™
emrahelmasli

Emrah Elmasli



Jean-Sebastien Rossbach

Freelance Artist

"To the aspiring pros around reading this, I'd say: draw; draw again; draw till your hands bleed. Go to art school, learn and stay open-minded, observe a lot. Culture is everywhere, so get off the Internet and go to museums. Don't forget to live a real life in order to have things to tell in your art. Young artists always tend to emulate the style of the artists they love. Copying someone else's style is not a bad thing but at least you should be able to find what concept lays behind the style. Style is not the message. There's this sentence I like very much, which says "practice safe design, always use a concept".

Vinegar

Freelance Artist

"I'm afraid I'm going to be so unoriginal; just practice! Talent is important too, but everyone can learn how to draw when they practice. I really do mean everybody! I saw many people who had never drawn before and after a few years of practice they became great! Studying other artists' work and experimenting with various techniques is also something I'd recommend!"

Enrah Elmasli

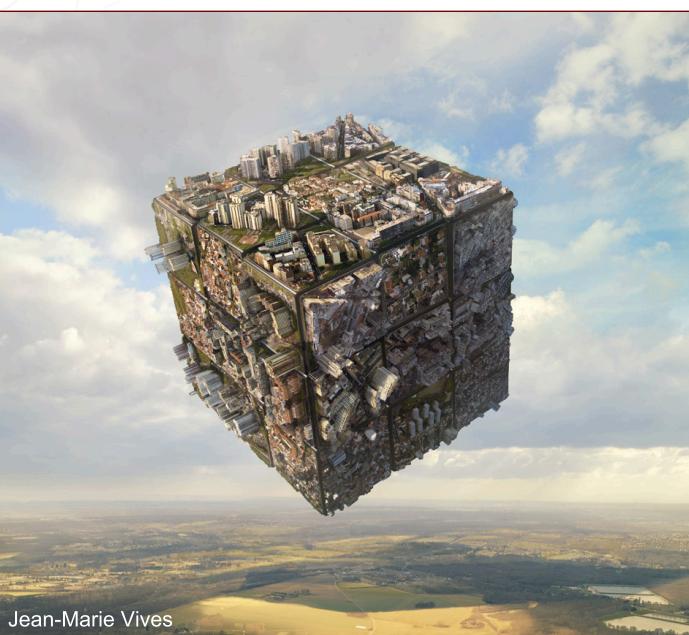
Matte Painter & Concept Artist

"It's harder to get into the CG industry if you're living in a country where there are few or no opportunities. Your only chance is to work a lot and prepare a good portfolio. The best way to show your portfolio is to have a clean and professionally designed web site. Then you need to search for freelance jobs. It's actually the only way to gain experience. You can search the big CG forums like 3DTOTAL, CGTalk and ConceptArt. Game companies post job announcements on these sites. There is a chance to find a contract work opportunity as well. You can apply to these jobs and get the gig if you're good enough. After a while, they will find you. It depends on the quality of your work and how well you're known. Then who knows? You can get a full-time job offer."

Matt Haley

Comic Book Artist

"Don't try to get a job with a comic publisher right out of the gate, as those days are largely over. Instead, bide your time and create your own comic or manga, and simply do your own thing. Creating your own comic is one of the single most satisfying artistic endeavours one can undertake, and the best part is that nobody can tell you that you did it wrong!"



Jean-Marie Vives

**Jean-Marie Vives**

Matte Painter

"It is very difficult to give specialist advice, because what was valid for me does not have to be forced upon others. Number one is to improve your ways and to work against the clock. There is a proverb which says that "the experiment is a lantern which lights only its own path". If I was to give advice to only one of them, then it would be to rise the morning whilst being aware of what remains to be achieved."

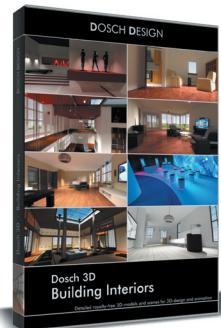
Tom Artur Opasinski

Movie Poster & Digital Artist

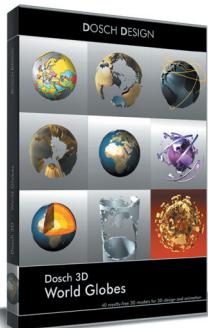
"To be patient. Sometimes it takes 20 years to achieve what you really love to do."

Inspiring Advice Article Compiled by: Ben Barnes

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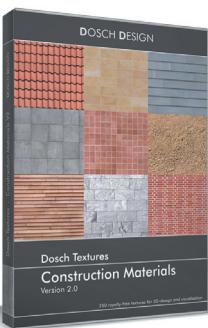
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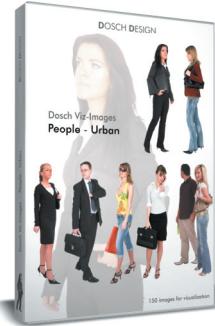
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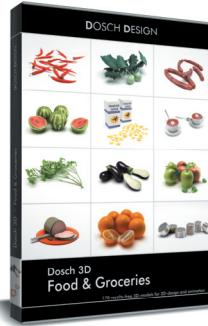
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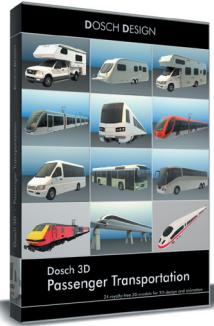
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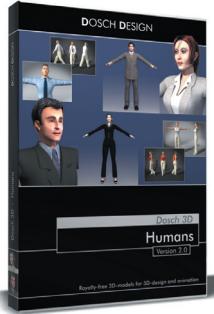
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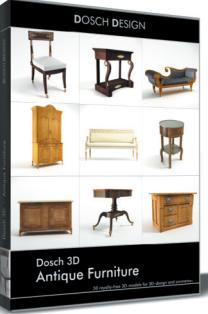
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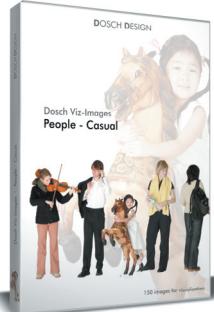
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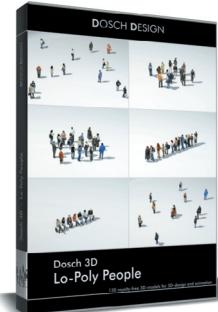
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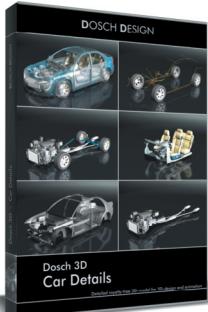
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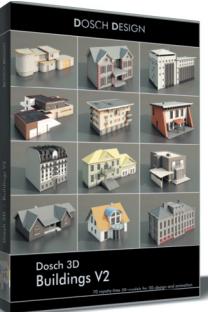
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www.doschdesign.com

A woman in a blue bikini is floating in water, surrounded by glowing blue rings. The background is dark and textured.

10 Images from Around the World.

This month Featuring :

Björn Wirtz

Simon Legrand

Tuna Ferit Hidayetoglu

Vitaly Samarin Alexius

Peter Chan

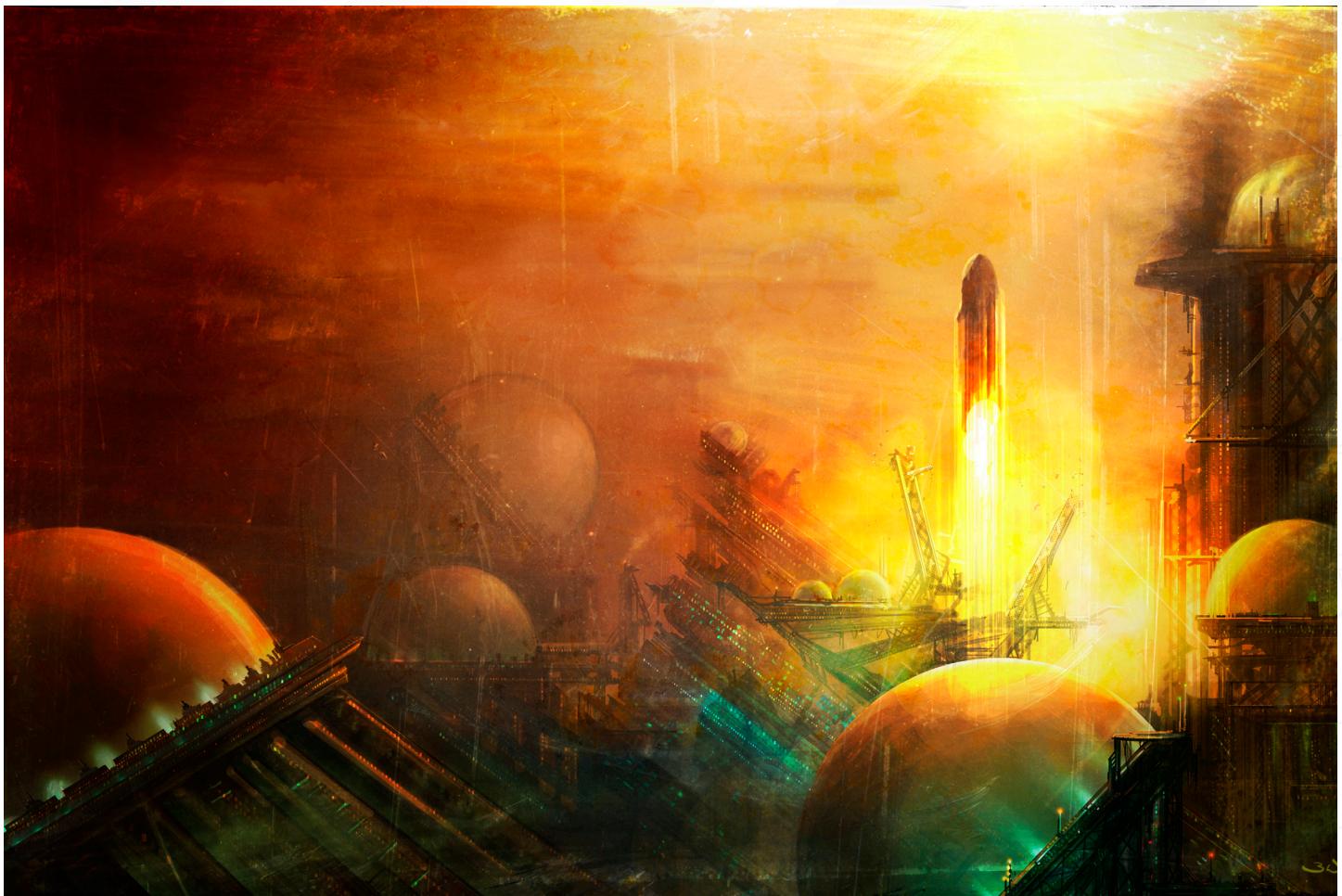
Olga Antonenko

Choi, Tae Young

David Revoy

John Wu

christophe vacher



The Mission

Björn Wirtz

webmaster@derwolpertinger.de

<http://www.derwolpertinger.de>

You can read an in-depth interview with this
artist in 3DCreative Magazine soon!

Rebel Cat

Simon Legrand

legrand.simon@gmail.com

<http://slegrand.blogspot.com/>



Tuna Ferit

Amy Lee Portrait

Tuna Ferit Hidayetoglu

tunaferit@hotmail.com

<http://tunaferit.deviantart.com>

Follow the making of this image in the February Issue of 2DArtist!

Spray IT

Peter Chan

peterch@vfs.com

<http://sleepar.deviantart.com/gallery>



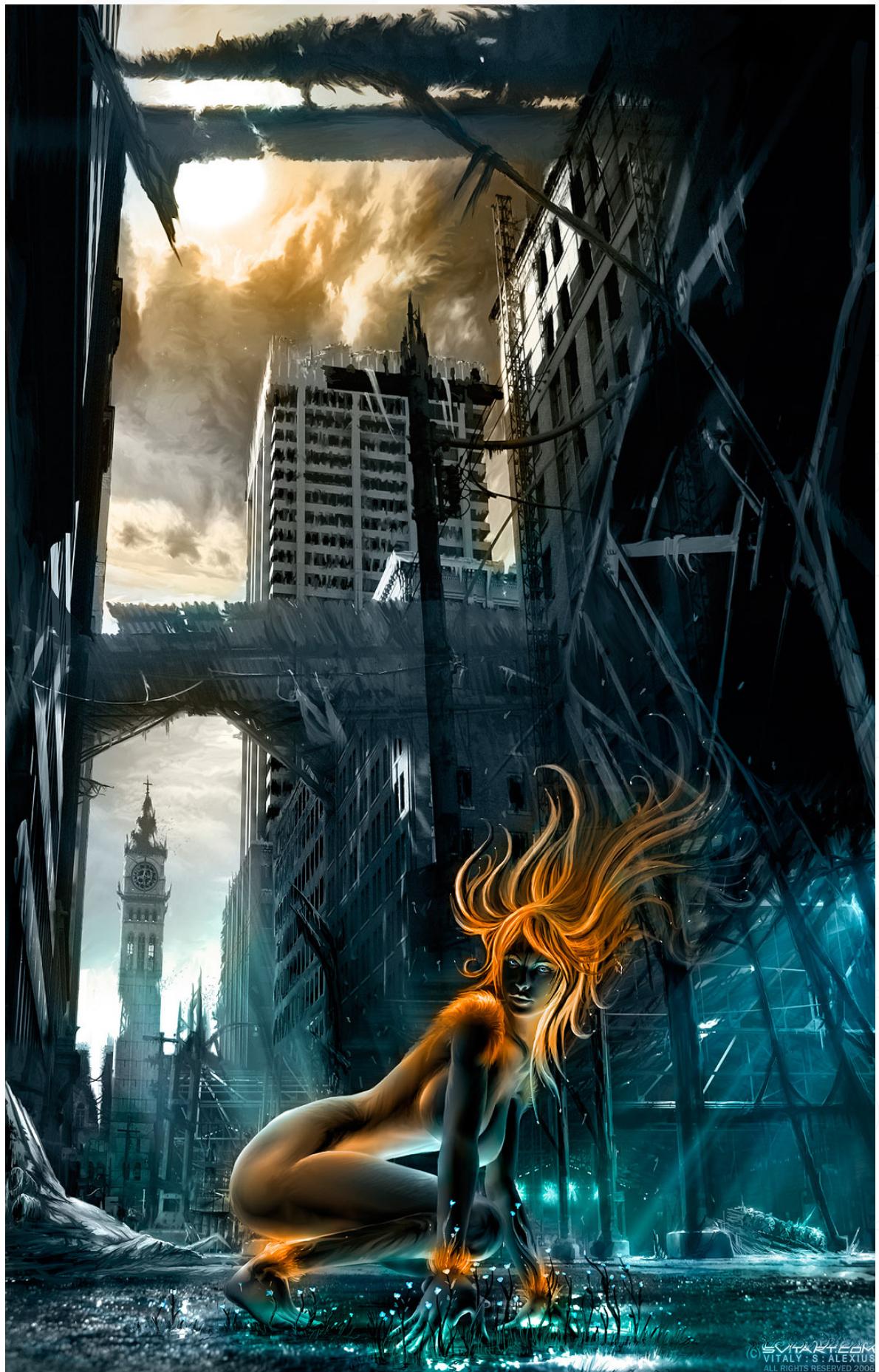
Feral Nova

Vitaly Samarin Alexius

doctor_vit@hotmail.com

<http://www.svitart.com>

You can read an in-depth interview with this artist in 3DCreative Magazine soon!



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City at the waterfall

Olga Antonenko

total@cgopolis.com

<http://www.cgopolis.com>

You can read an in-depth interview with this artist in 3DCreative Magazine soon!



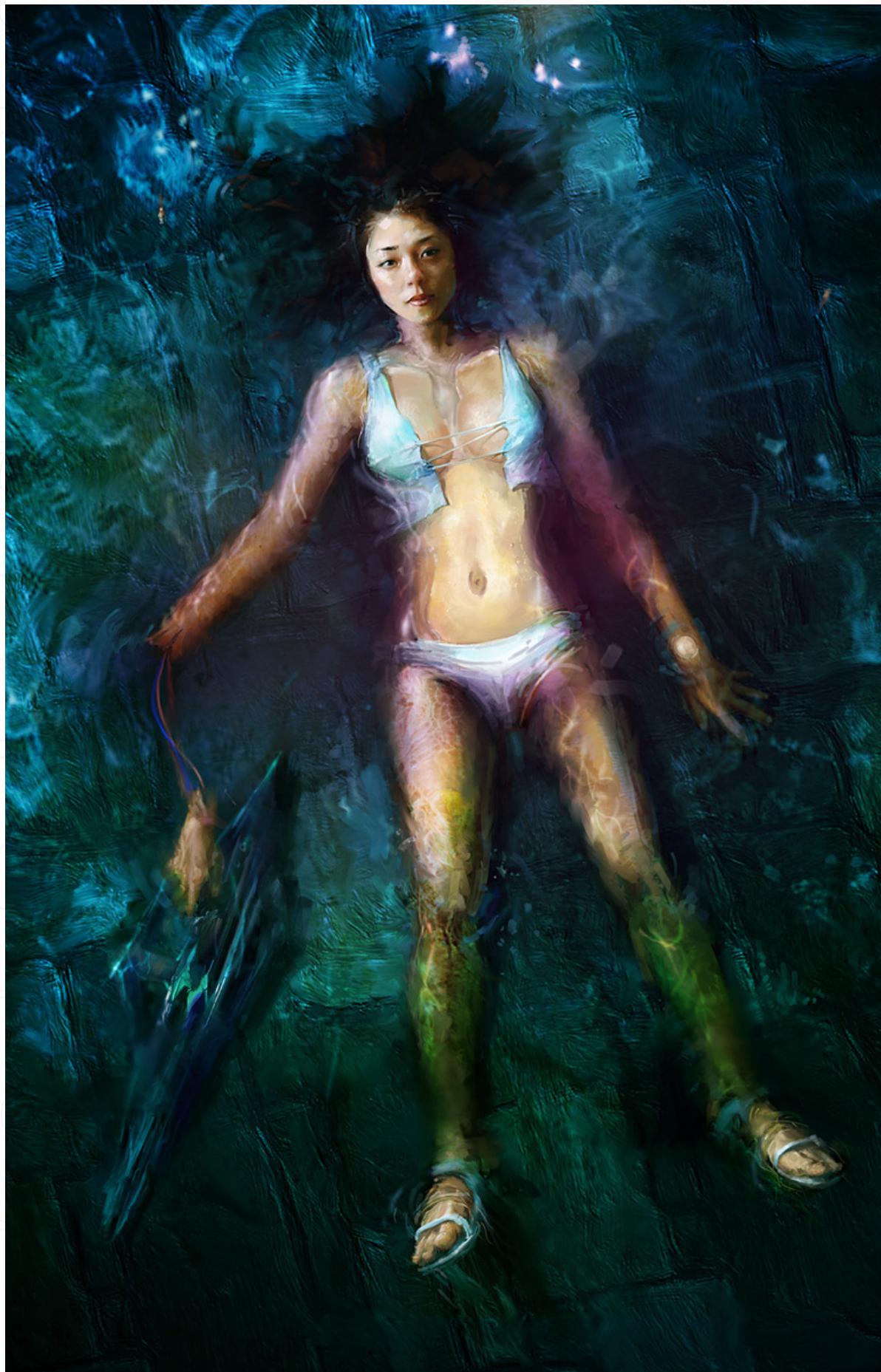


Bad spirit of the forest

David Revoy

david.revoy@free.fr

<http://www.davidrevoy.com>



Prototypes

Choi, Tae Young

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Double Circus

Gracjana Zielinska (a.k.a . vinegar)

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<http://vinegaria.com>



Welcome Home

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<http://www.therealjohnwu.com>



Quantum Dreams

THE ART OF STEPHAN MARTINIÈRE



3DCreative have teamed up with 3dtotal.com and design studio press to give you a preview of some fantastic books on offer.

This Month: Quantum Dreams.

"There's something almost uncanny in seeing things you've imagined, and only described in words, depicted. It's even more unsettling to see them depicted more clearly and vividly and accurately than you imagined them. Stephan Martiniere's covers for my books have that effect on me. They look as if he has taken a camera and a sketchbook to these very worlds, and has seen more of them than I did. We should all be grateful for Martiniere's mind's eye."

– Ken MacLeod , author, *The Cassini Division* and the trilogy, *The Engines of Light*

"Stephan isn't just a stunning illustrator, he is truly a designer, with a great sense of harmony and style. He can create extremely organic objects or creatures as well as the most stylistic architecture of today and tomorrow."

– Patrick Tatopoulos production designer, *I, Robot*, *Dark City*, *Independence Day*

"I find the uniqueness of his vision and confidence of his presentation endlessly fascinating and inspiring. We are fortunate that Stephan's skills allow us to experience his fantastic imagination and all of his worlds."

– Ryan Church, concept design supervisor, *Star Wars III*

QUANTUM DREAMS: The Art of Stephan Martinière, is a collection of his sci-fi book cover paintings, video game designs and personal art. Stephan takes others' descriptions of faraway, imaginary realms...and makes them real. Stephan's career has taken him from France to Japan to California, where he has worked in the fields of animation, concept art, theme park motion ride design, video games and book cover art. He helped design the worlds of *I, Robot* and *Star Wars Episodes II and III* , and with his book covers makes fantasy worlds come to life with a single image. **QUANTUM DREAMS** contains 130 illustrations, including supporting sketches and early versions of finished pieces, with descriptions that give you an inside look into Stephan's creativity and process.

Product Details

Paperback: 80 pages

Dimensions: 9 x 12 inches

Illustrated: 130 illustrations

Publisher: Design Studio Press

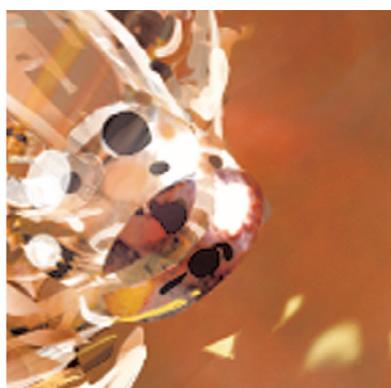
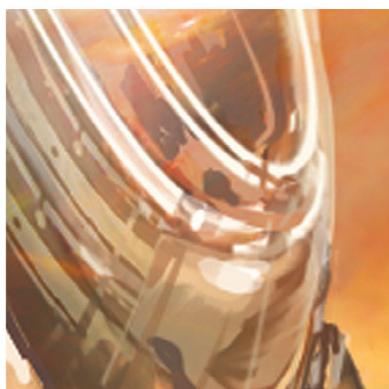
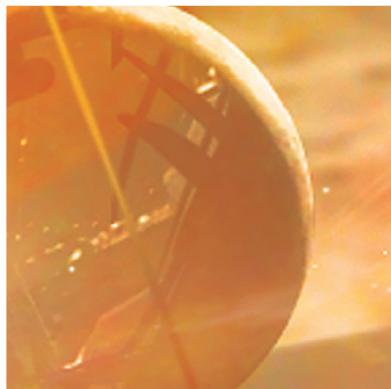
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HOSTILE TAKEOVER

book cover | written by Sandra Shwartz

The request from the art director was simple and straightforward; “babe in space with a big gun.” I had done the Polyhedron Magazine cover a year before, depicting a pilot babe with mecha robots, so I wanted to do something different. I chose orange as an overall color simply because I hadn’t done a lot of paintings in that color palette. It also happened that Jupiter was the location of the story. It was a perfect choice. The painting of the character uses a lot of a technique I refer to as “scratching,” juxtaposing different colored layers and using the eraser to scratch/uncover the layers underneath. I find the technique very direct and gestural.



The logo of Stephan Martiniere, consisting of a stylized 'S' and 'M' intertwined within a square frame.

STEPHAN MARTINIERE 2004

Custom Brush Variations

This is the first in a series of 3 variations on how to go about creating custom brushes in Photoshop CS2.

This first process is done using Photoshop's default brushes and the brush options, which can give you any effect you're looking for if you know how the settings work...



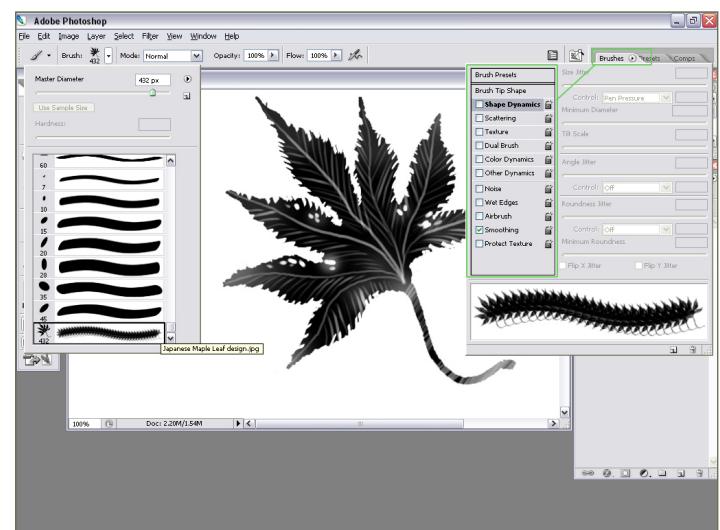
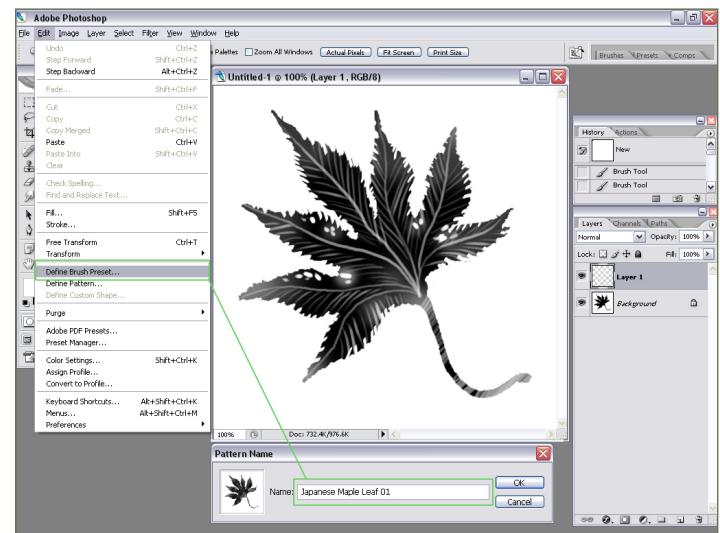
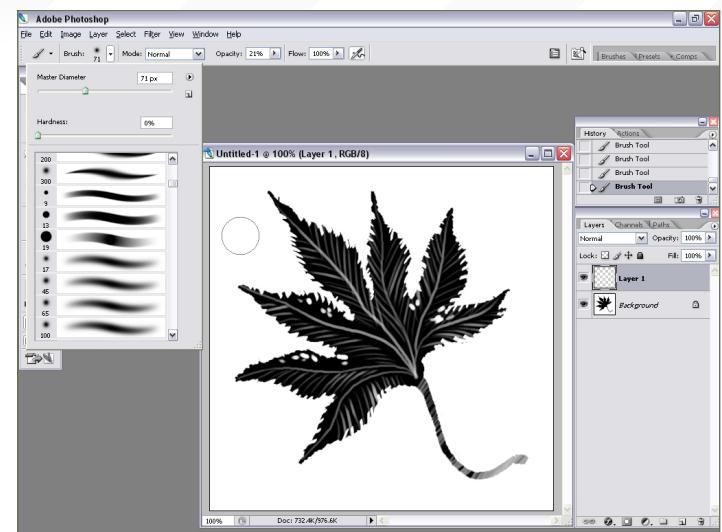
Custom Brushes

Created In:

Photoshop

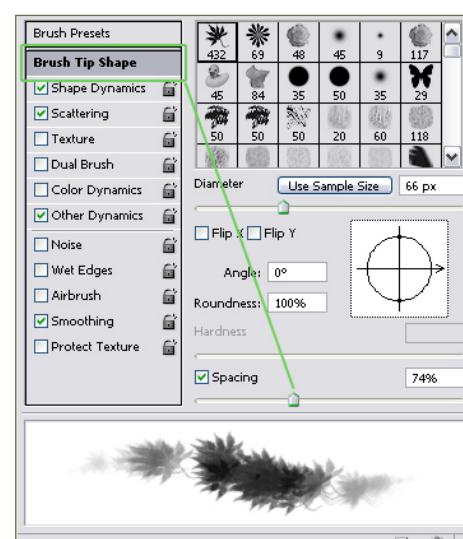
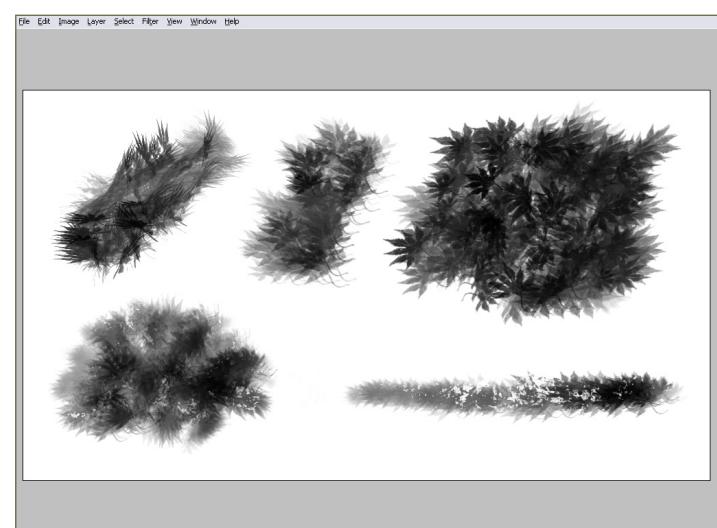
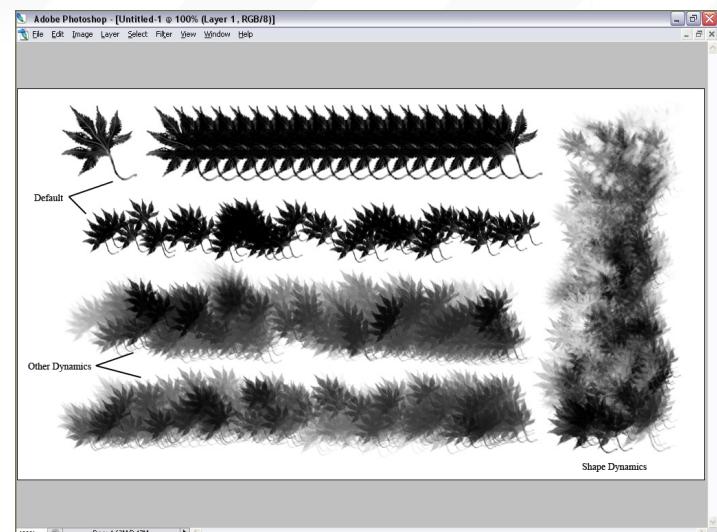
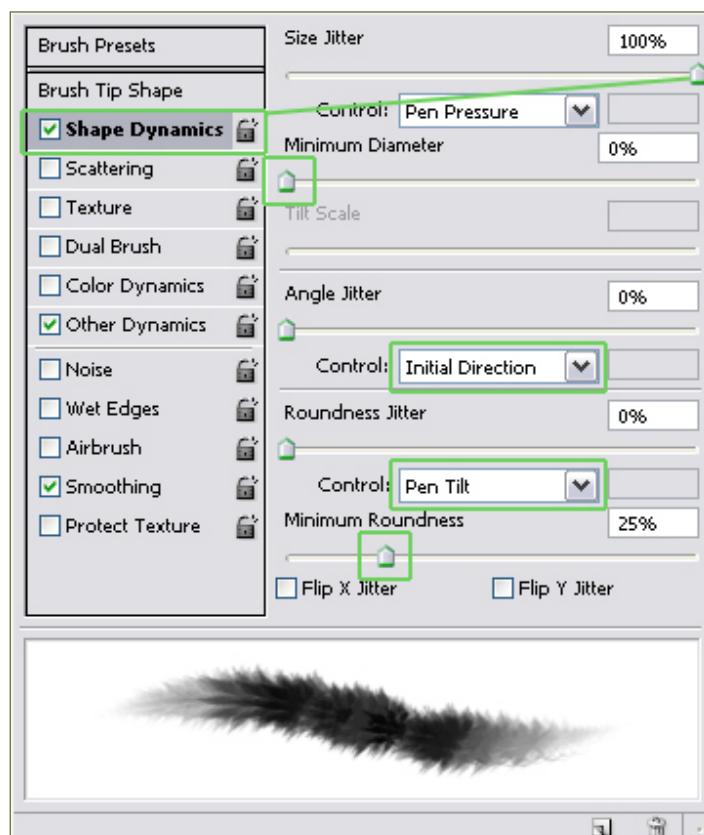
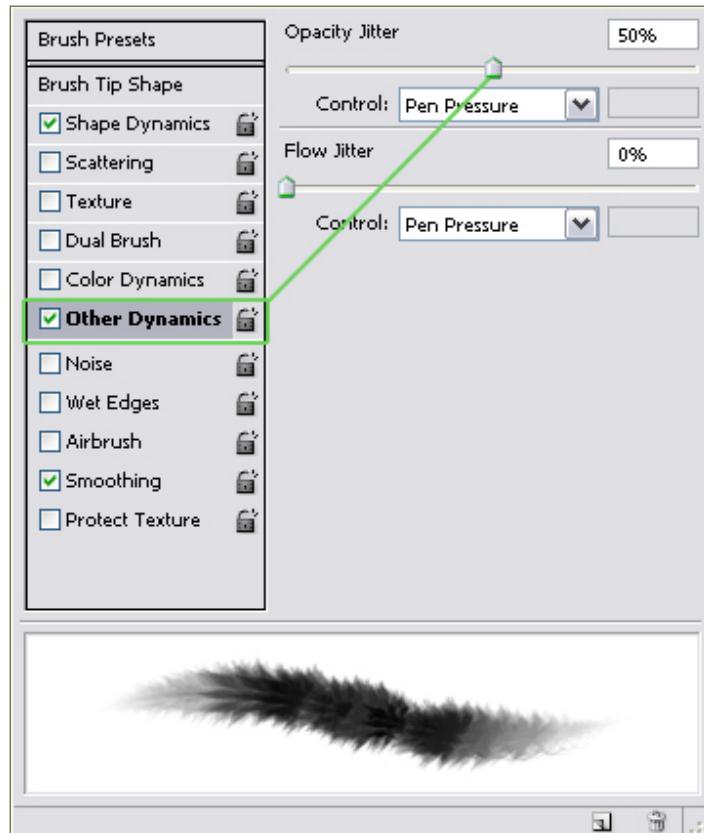
Creating a brush from scratch in Photoshop: Testing it and tweaking the options

The first thing to do is create a blank canvas; I usually make sure it's set at 300dpi resolution, around 500x500 pixels, so the brush itself doesn't become pixelated or incapable of scaling to larger sizes when working on a large image. This first brush design is going to be geared toward foliage, specifically a Japanese Maple Leaf, which will be used to create quick, easy batches of leaves without going through too much rendering trouble. So, grab any of the default brushes supplied by Photoshop and just start to draw out a silhouetted shape, in this case the Japanese Maple Leaf (Fig.01). Since we do want a bit of depth to the brush, block in some of the veins, rips and rigged edges of the leaf. You can also fade some areas so everything isn't on the same level and help give a bit of variation (Fig.02). Now that you've created the brush shape itself, you need to save it. Go to 'Edit > Define Brush Preset' and then choose a name and click 'OK' (Fig. 03). You'll notice that the new brush, with the name you've chosen, will show up in the brush list at the very bottom. The next step is to select the new brush you've just created and click the 'Brushes Option' window located at the top-right with a little



arrow next to it. This brings down the brush settings you can apply to your custom brush (Fig.04). Leaving the brush settings at a default doesn't allow for much control or variation in the strokes. So the first thing to do is allow for some pressure sensitivity, and you do this using the 'Other Dynamics' setting (Fig.05). Set the 'Opacity Jitter' to approximately 50%

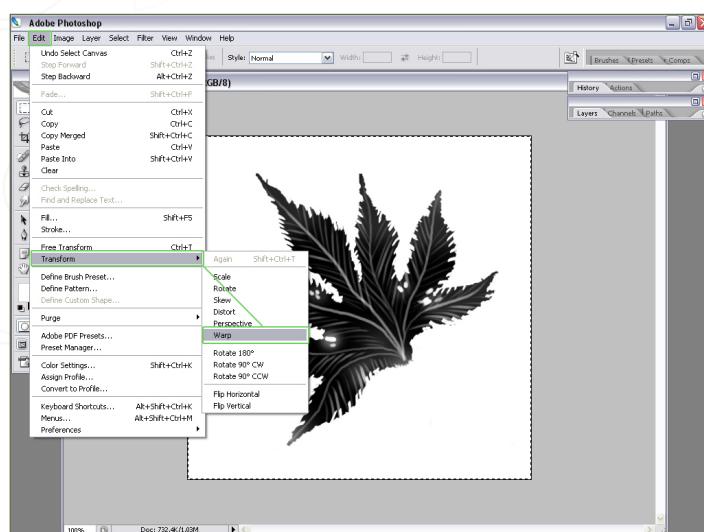
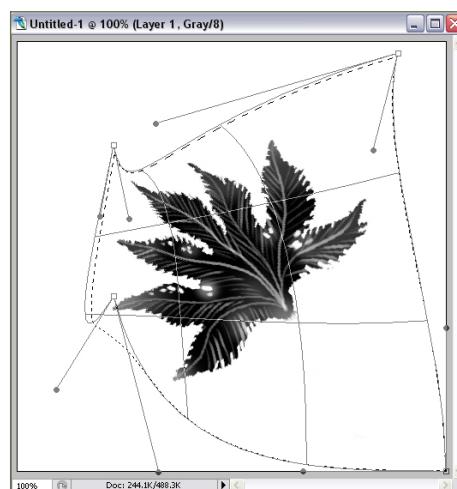
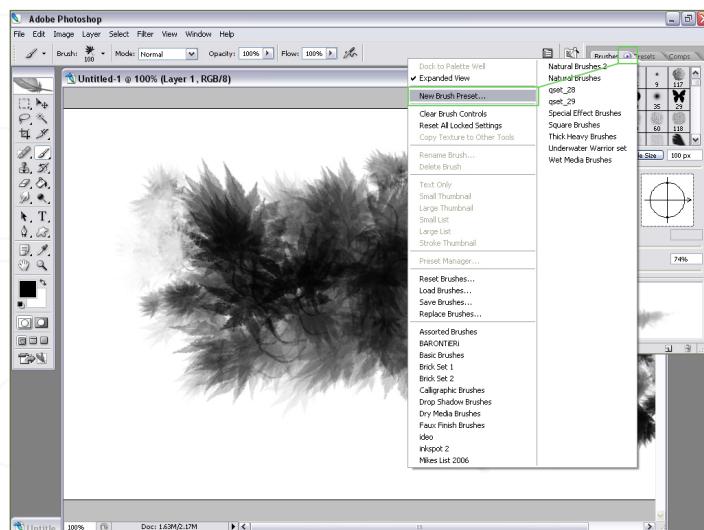
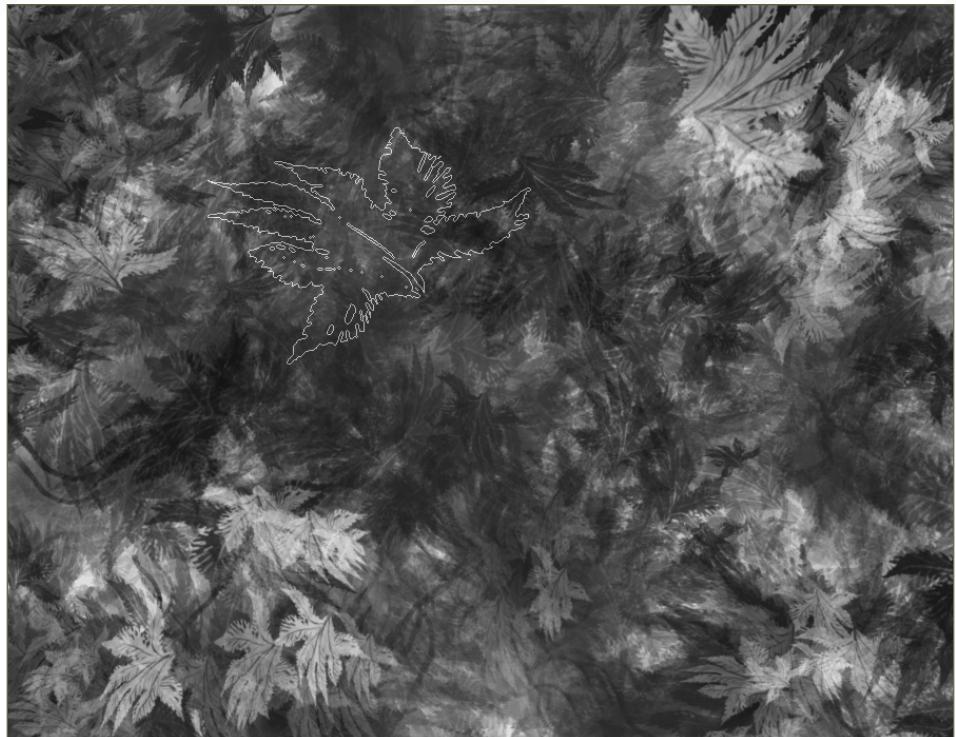
and make sure the control settings are set to 'Pen Pressure'. To provide some variation in the direction and scale of the brush, choose the 'Shape Dynamics' settings (Fig. 06). Set the 'Size Jitter' to 100% and make sure the control settings under 'Angle Jitter' are set to 'Initial Direction'. The



control settings under the 'Roundness Jitter' should be set to 'Pen Tilt', and a minimum roundness of approximately 25% (Fig.07). Now that we know where the settings for the brush options are, you can feel free to test them and play around with different variations, different percentages

of control and varying dynamics, including scatter and dual brush modes (Fig.08). One of the last settings I adjusted before finding the right feel for this custom brush was choosing the 'Brush Tip Shape' (Fig.09) option and applying a 74% spacing to the separation of the brushes flow. OK, so our brush settings are complete, all that we need to do is save the

brush options that have been applied. It's very important throughout this process that you don't choose another brush, otherwise you may lose all the settings you have applied to your custom brush. Click the 'Brushes Option' window, located at the top-right with a little arrow next to it, like previously, and now choose 'New Brush Preset'. Label your new brush, click 'OK', and the custom brush you created earlier will now be saved with the new settings you've applied, and located at the bottom of your brush list (Fig.10). The next step is just quick and basically a recap of what we just went over. I'm going to create a quick variation of the Japanese Maple Leaf by getting rid of the stem and adjusting the shape of the points. First, erase the stem of the original brush, then choose 'Select>All' then 'Edit>Transform>Warp' (Fig.11). You'll notice that the entire box has been selected with the



dotted lines, and once you choose the 'Warp' transformation option you can choose points on this graphed box to mould and skew the brush shape (Fig.12). You can also grab anywhere inside the box and just drag it to transform its original outline and then apply the transformation

to confirm the change (Fig.13). After applying a few of the same Brush Options, such as the 'Other Dynamics' and 'Shape Dynamics', I've played around with it and I'm happy with this variation on our original brush (Fig.14). Save the brush preset, as we have done previously, and it will be added to your list. Lastly, now that we have two custom Japanese Maple brushes, both with

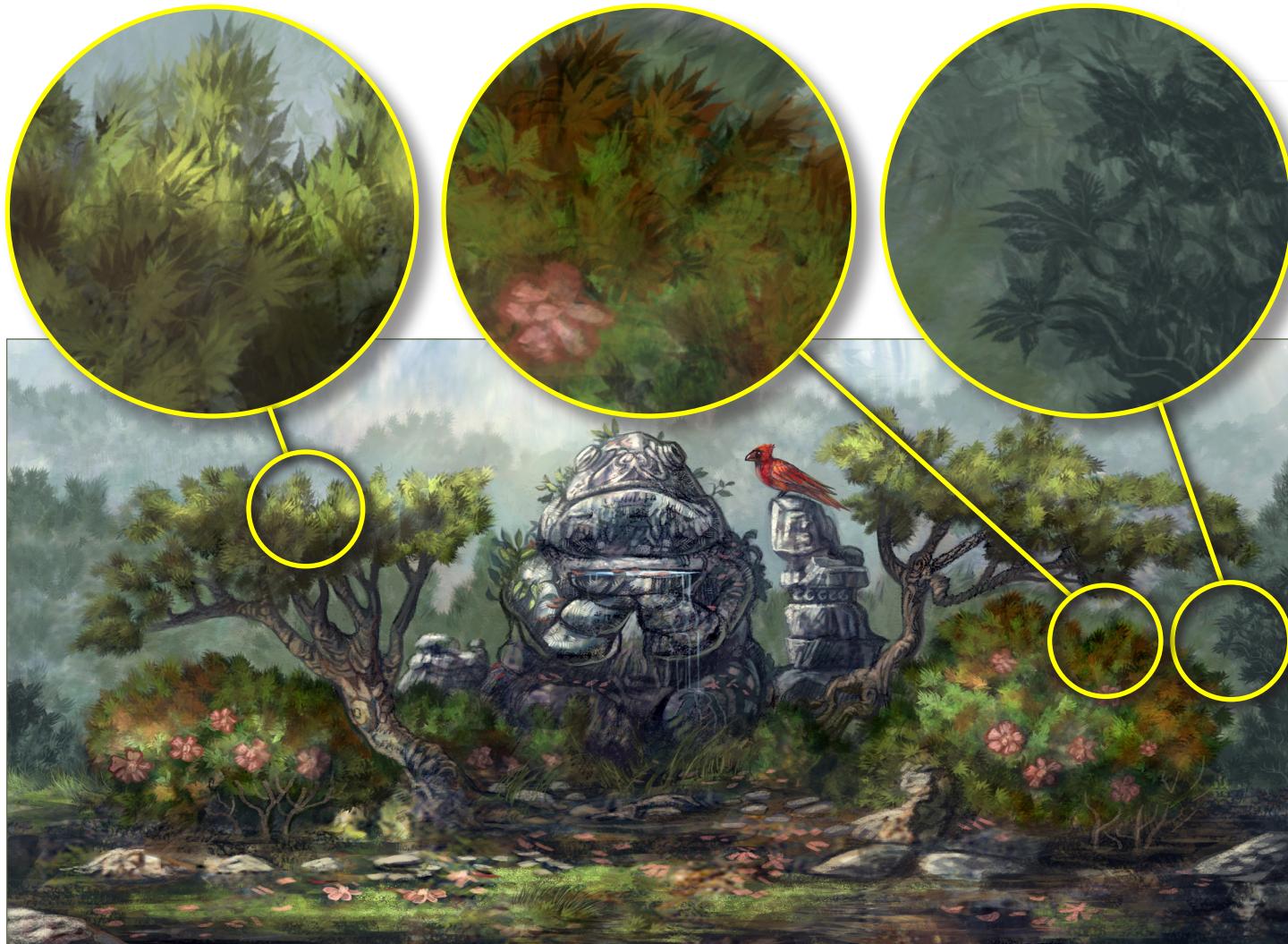
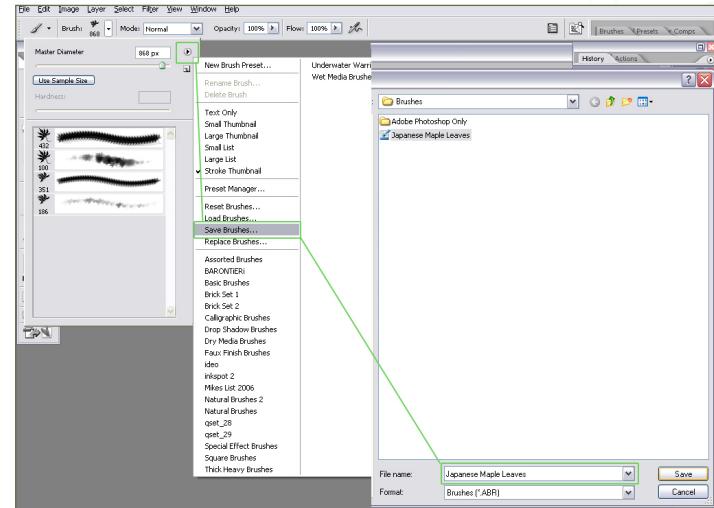
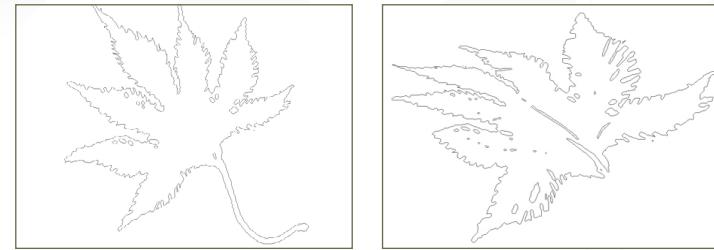
the default shape and the brush settings saved as preset brushes, you'll want to save the Brush list. On your Brush list there is an arrow next to the top-right of this box. Click the arrow > 'Save Brushes' > label your brush list, and now they will be stored and can be used at any time you wish (Fig.15). To access your Brush list just in the same manner as saving your list, choose 'Load Brushes' and select your Brush list file. The original version of the custom Japanese Maple Leaf brush can be seen in Fig.16. The modified version of the Japanese Maple Leaf brush can be seen in Fig. 17. See Fig.18 to 20 for close-up details showing the two brushes used together in the painting, using them in a few different methods; as a more muted back drop, and applying colour dynamics and lighting effects. I hope you've found this custom brush tutorial helpful and, if you're interested, check in next month for the second tutorial: using photographs online to produce a custom brush and how to take the brush and apply a custom texture.

Mike Corriero

For more from this artist visit:

<http://www.mikecorriero.com>

Or contact: mikecorriero@gmail.com



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07
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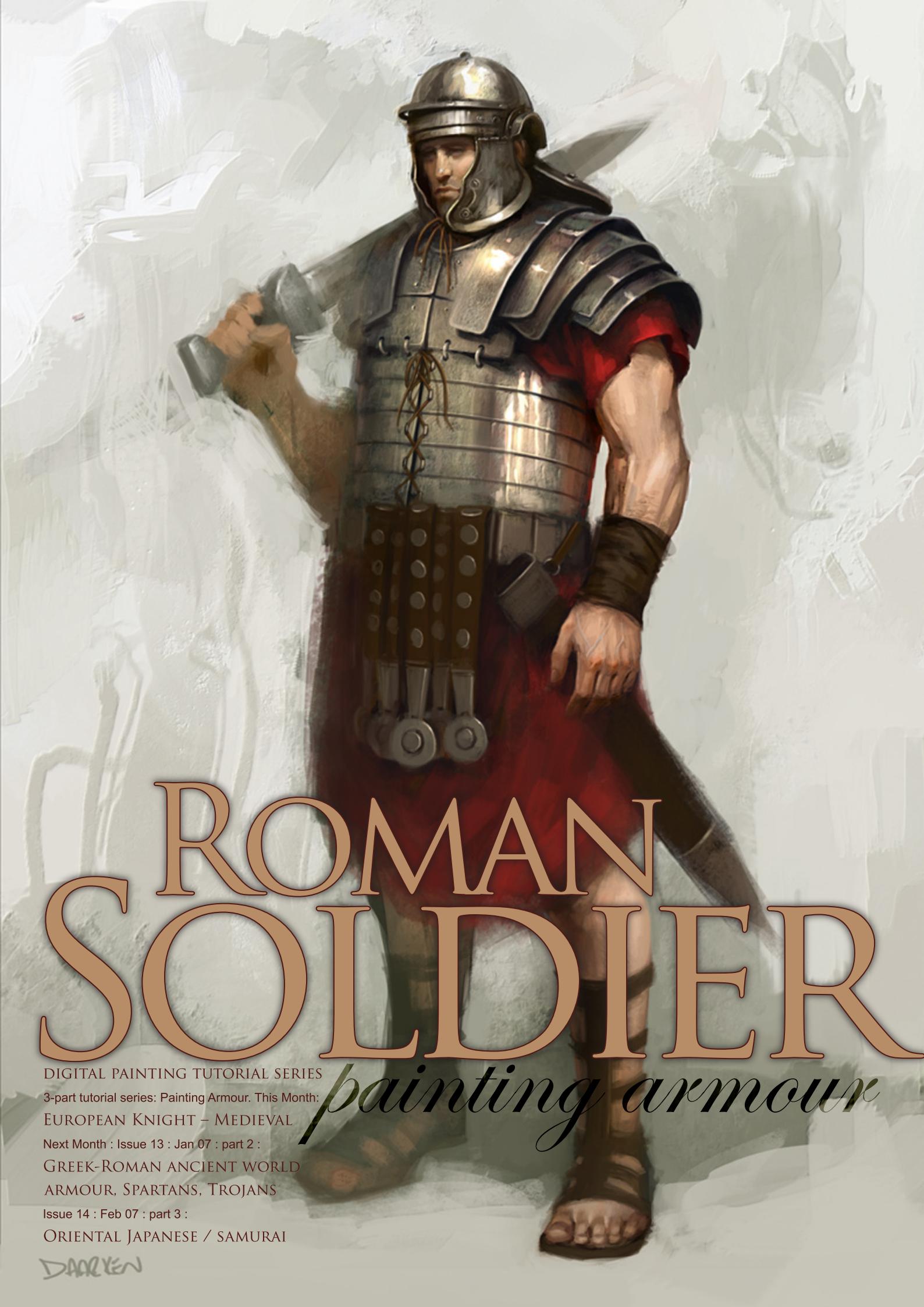


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ROMAN SOLDIER

painting armour

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GREEK-ROMAN ANCIENT WORLD
ARMOUR, SPARTANS, TROJANS

Issue 14 : Feb 07 : part 3 :
ORIENTAL JAPANESE / SAMURAI

DAARVEN

ROMAN SOLDIER

Created In:

Adobe Photoshop CS2

Research The first thing I usually do when I get a project is to collect all of the reference material that I am going to need. Most of the time you can find everything you need by just "Googling" it. I found some images (Fig.01) from www.aurorahistoryboutique.com and www.globaleffects.com. It is a good idea to start building up a large reference folder on your computer so that the next time you need some armour reference you will already have it. Now that we have our reference, we can start the illustration.

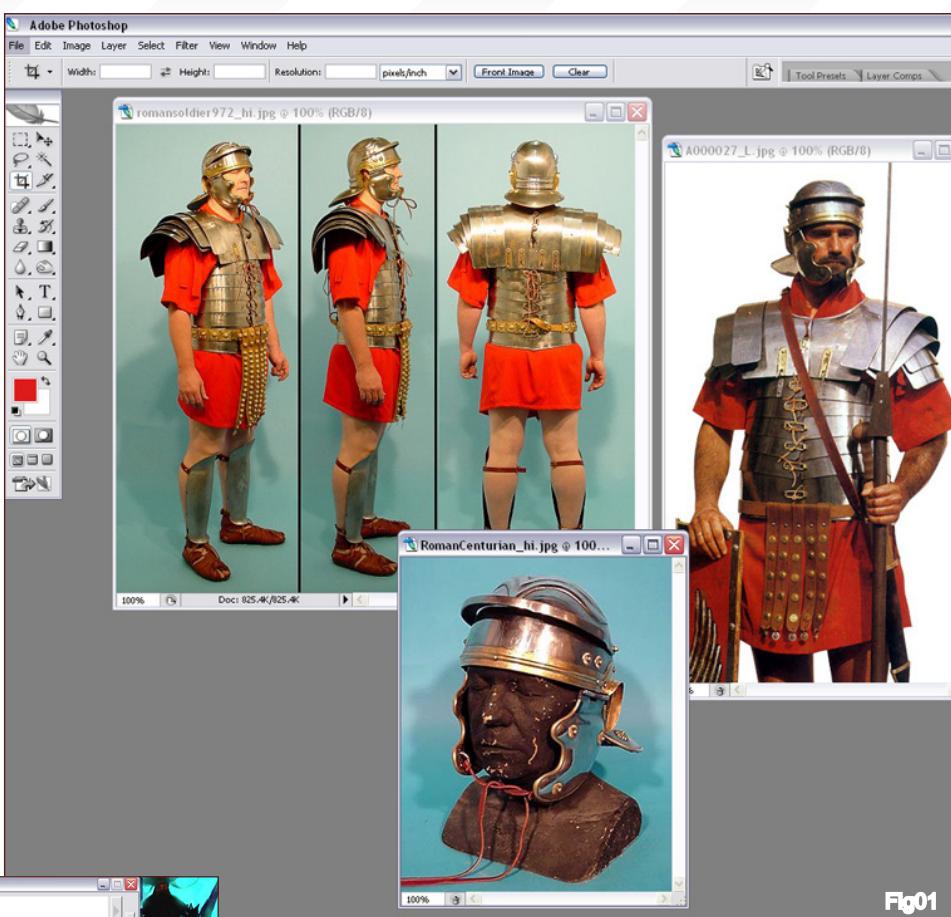


Fig01

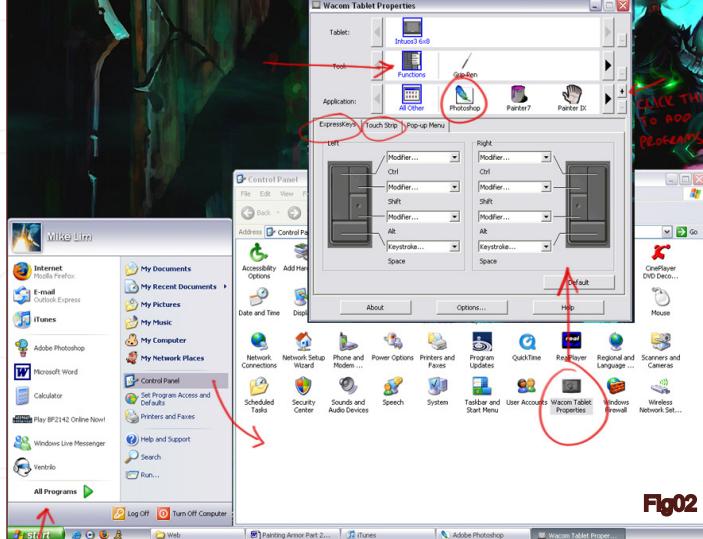


Fig02

Preparation This painting is going to be done primarily in Photoshop CS2, with a little bit of Painter IX for adding texture. I have included the Photoshop CS2 brushes I used so that you can try them out. To load them in Photoshop, click on the Brush tool and then right-click on the canvas. Your Brush menu should open. In the top-right corner is a small triangle button - click that and go to 'Load Brushes', then select the file that is included in this tutorial. As for what size file you should work in, I always paint at 300dpi, usually around 3000 pixels wide, depending on whether it is a vertical or horizontal illustration. This time my image is 2404x2905. I forgot to mention this in Part 1 of the tutorial, but you can check part 1 - European Knight - Medieval in the December Issue, so I will bring it up now. If you are going to be working as a professional illustrator, getting a tablet is a necessity. I use a 6x8 'Intuos III' tablet, and I would really recommend it because of the function buttons on the sides. Having these buttons has increased my efficiency and speed dramatically. I usually never even have to use the keyboard except for when I want to resize things or flip my canvas. Plus, the 'Intuos III' has a larger stylus, which is more comfortable for your hand. After you install your tablet you need to set up the function keys and touch strip for Photoshop. I am using a PC, so first click on the 'Start' button and then go to 'Control Panel'. Look for the 'Wacom Tablet Properties' icon and double-click it. This will bring up the dialogue box. Click on the 'Functions' button, under 'Tool'. This will allow you to customise your function buttons. You will

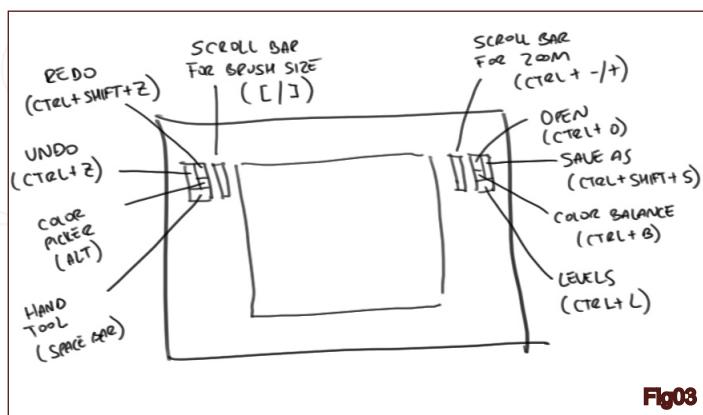


Fig03

probably want to make these buttons specific to Photoshop, so if Photoshop is not listed under 'Applications', then just hit the '+' button and you can choose Photoshop from there. Now click on the 'Express Keys' tab. This lets you customise each button separately. Next to that is the 'Touch Strip' tab, which lets you customise the touch strips - it is pretty self explanatory. Close the window when you are finished. Fig.02 is the image of the tablet configuration I mentioned above. People have been asking what I have my tablet function keys set to, so I figured I would draw a really bad drawing of a tablet and label the different buttons, as you can see from Fig.03.



Fig05

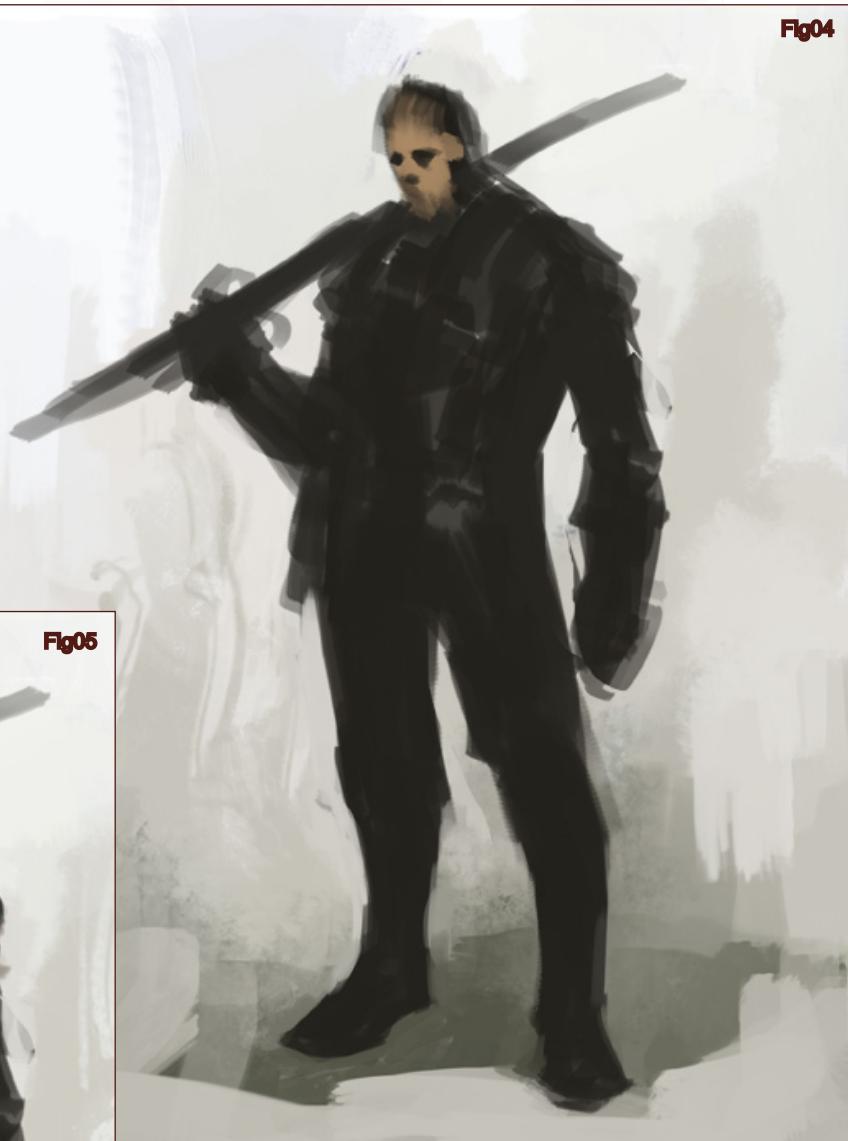


Fig04

The Block-In First I start by putting in some type of background; in this case I just tried to put down some interesting brushstrokes. After I have that done, I start the figure by blocking in the main silhouette. I never do any line drawings for my illustrations because I find it easier for me to paint in the shapes, as opposed to using line. For the face I always lay down a base skin colour and then add in the shapes for the eye sockets and the nose (Fig.04). Now that I am happy with the figure, I start to block in the shapes of the armour. I am not really sure yet what the armour is going to look like. I have a basic idea since I am doing a Roman soldier, but since I never do thumbnails I usually just go with the flow. I always hated doing thumbnails in school, and once I started freelancing professionally I found that I never had a client ask for thumbnails, so I just never did them. I probably should, since it would probably help with my compositions and to give me a better idea as to what I am going to paint, instead of constantly changing my illustration.(Fig.05). At this time I go ahead and jump in with the colour scheme of my illustration. I put down

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the base red colour for his clothing, as well as a yellow for the armour. I also block in the areas where you can see his skin. A lot of times when I am at this stage I end up putting down some highlights so I can see where I am going. Usually you should hold off on the highlights until the end, but I am impatient. Plus, I know that I will be making the highlights brighter later on (Fig.06).

Adding the Detail

When I am working on an illustration I always try to keep it zoomed out to 25%. This actually determines what size I make my paper size as well. Basically, I resize the image so that it takes up a fair amount of space in the window at 25% zoom. The reason I work zoomed out is so that I won't get bogged down with detail early on. This always allows me to see the entire illustration as a whole, and I can judge more easily if things look correct. I also constantly flip my canvas horizontally so that I can more easily see any errors. Even when I do start to detail things I normally try not to zoom in. I also try to work on one layer as well. The only reason I am working



Fig.06

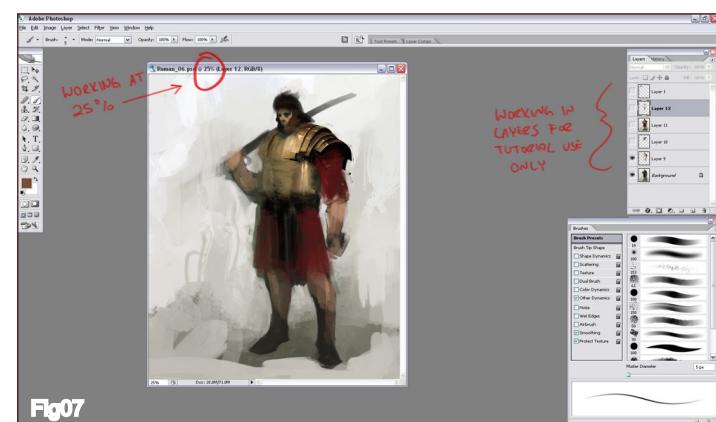


Fig.08

in several layers on this illustration is because it makes it easier to save my different steps for this tutorial (Fig.07). In this step I just made a minor change in the colour. I believe I added more blue and cyan. During the process of any illustration I tend to change the colours a lot. The colours I start with are just a starting point, never an ending point (Fig.08). After looking at his armour for a while, I began to notice some technical errors.

If you follow through with the shape of the second armour segment - the blue line - you can see that the shape I initially drew for it was too far over to the right. You wouldn't actually see it because it would be behind his arm (Fig.09). Not only that, but I also felt like the first two armour plates weren't wrapping around correctly, so in the next step I am going to fix that as well. The easy way to fix this is by using the distort tool. First, use the lasso tool to select the area that you want to fix, then go to 'Edit > Transform > Distort'. Now just drag the lower-left corner and hit 'Enter'. All you have to do now is go back and fix up some areas, and you're done. Fig.10 is the result of fixing. I mentioned earlier that I was going to make the highlights brighter; I like to use the colour dodge setting on the brush to accomplish this, not the actual dodge tool. I added an example of what it would look like if you used the dodge tool. Basically the dodge

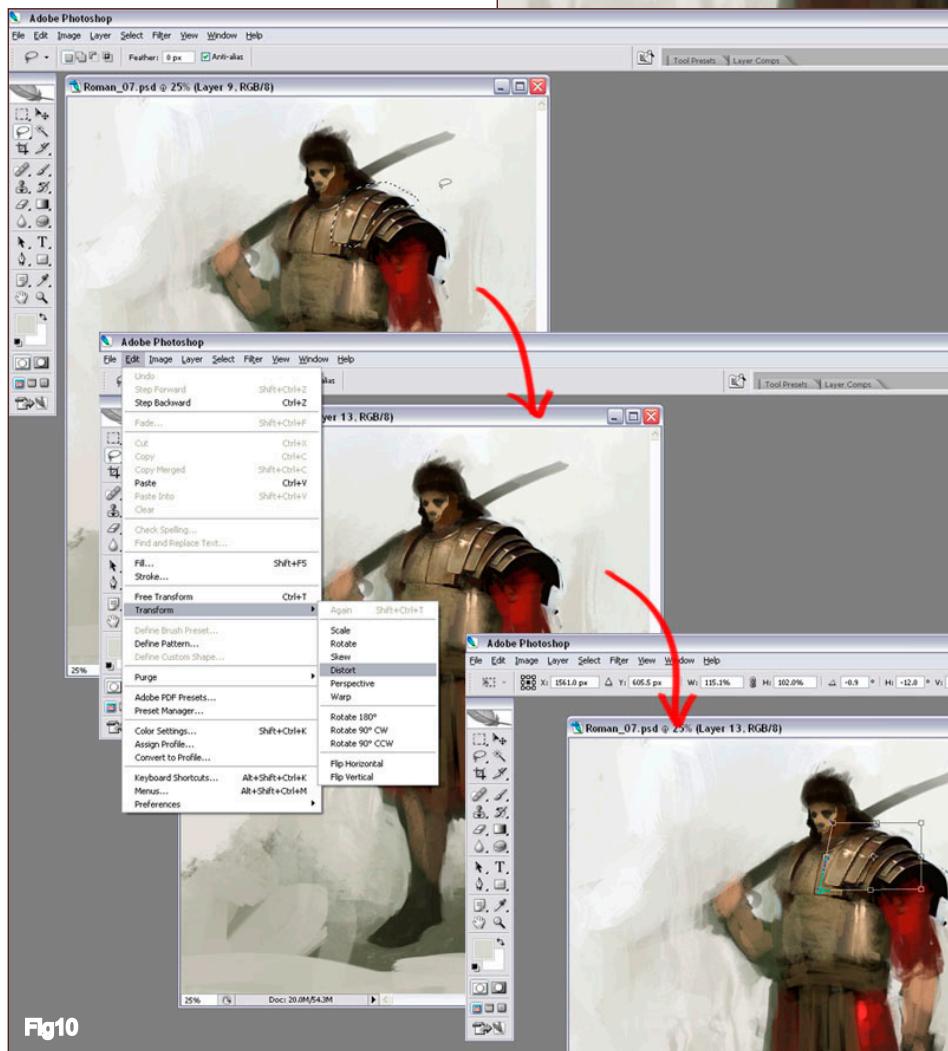
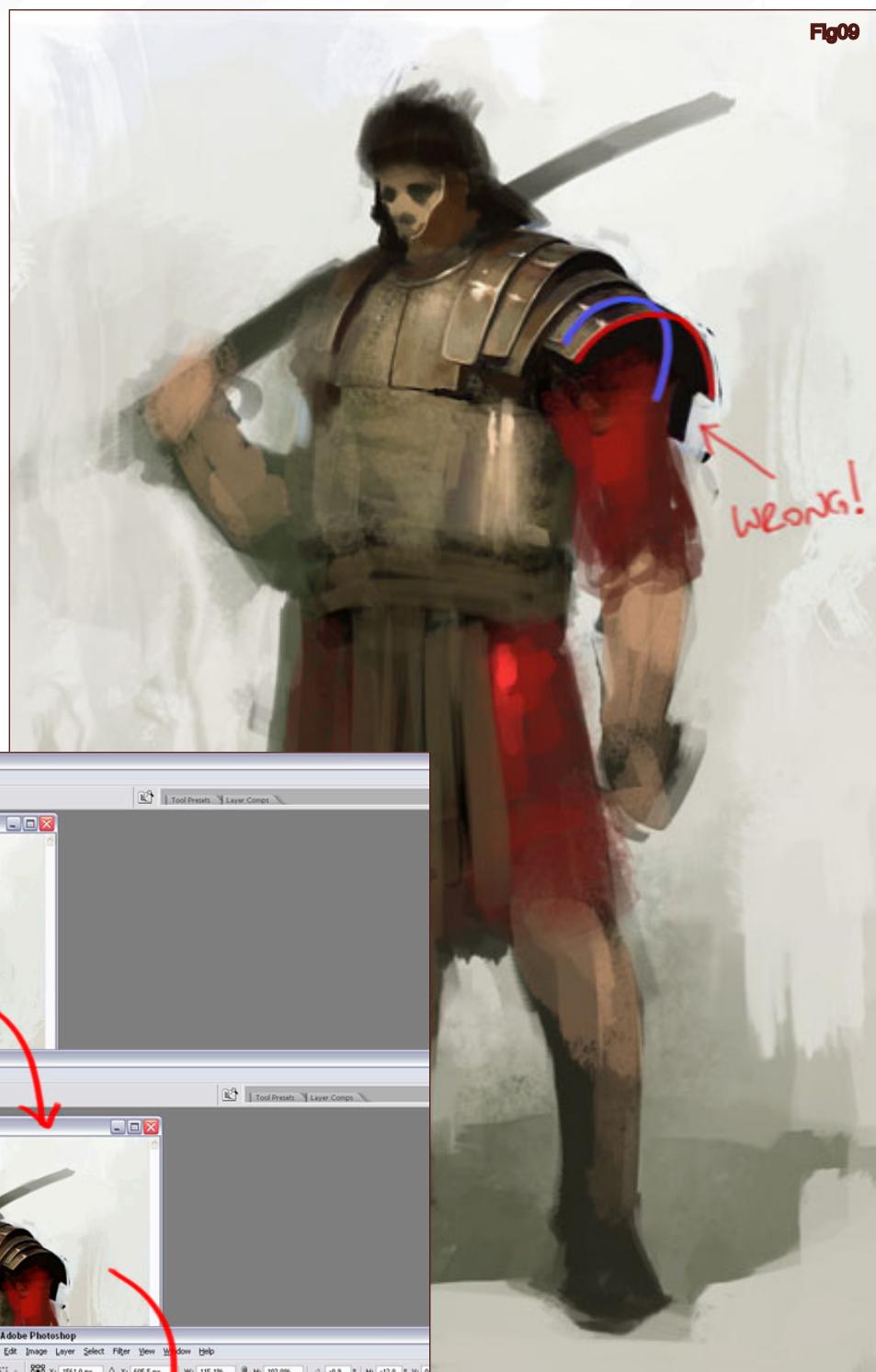


Fig10

tool sucks out the colour and makes it look really bad. The way to use the colour dodge setting with a brush is to click on the Brush tool, then go up and set the 'Mode' to 'Colour Dodge' from the drop-down menu. Next you want to pick a darker colour, or else you will risk overexposing the image very quickly. By using a dark colour you can build up the highlights in a more controlled manner. Also use a soft brush, like the airbrush

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shown in Fig.11. In Part 1 of the tutorial series - the medieval knight - I showed how to add textures from images. This time I used more textured brushes. One brush I used is kind of like a chalk brush. You can see what it looks like with and without the dual brush setting. I used this brush to build up the texture on the armour (Fig.12).

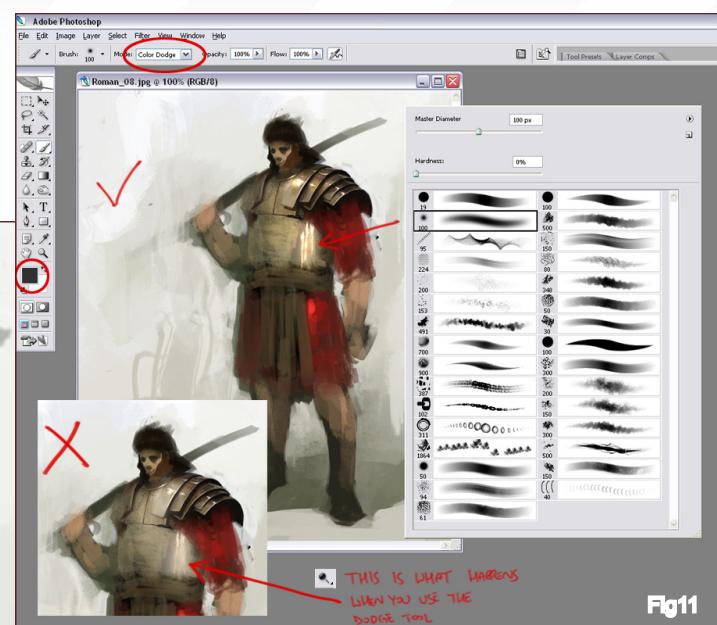


Fig11

The Final Touches

Now that I have all the basic shapes and colours down I can just go in and finish off with the details, like the separation in the different armour plates, rivets, rings, etc. (Fig.13-15). I also begin to spend more time on the face (Fig.16 &17). Another way to get some cool textures is to take this to Painter IX. First, drop all your layers, and then select the whole canvas. Make sure you have the 'Layer Adjuster' tool selected, then hold 'Alt' and left-click on the painting. This makes a copy of your painting. Now select the top layer and go to 'Effects > Surface Control > Apply

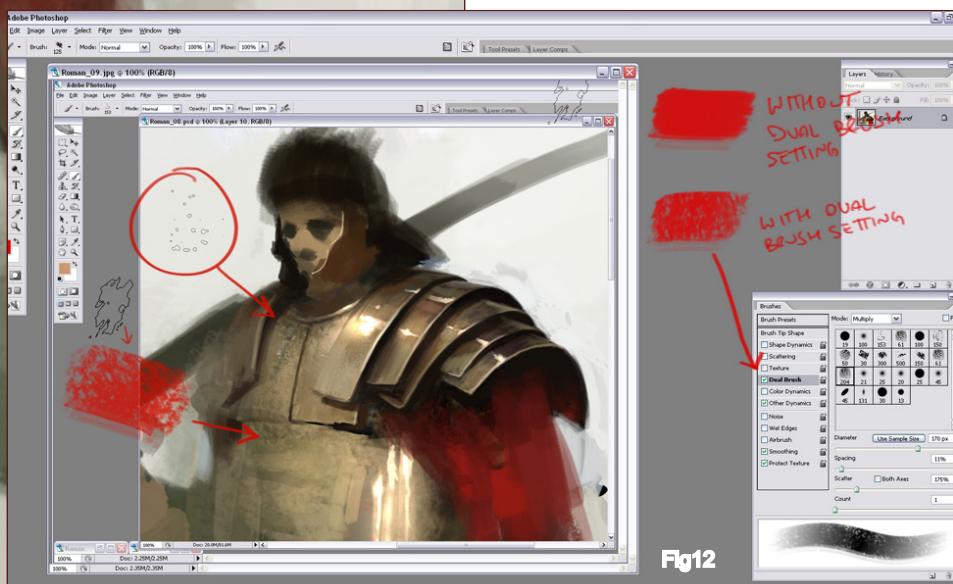


Fig13

Fig12



Fig14



Fig15



Fig16



Fig17

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2d
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Surface Texture'. Under 'Using' select 'Image Luminance'. Make sure that you have 'Shine' set to zero. You can also now adjust the 'Amount' to whatever you think looks good. This effect enhances your brushwork and will also make your painting look sharper (Fig.18). The arm wasn't really attaching correctly so I went back and painted in an arm without the sleeve. After getting the arm correct, I paint the sleeve on top of the arm (Fig.19&20).

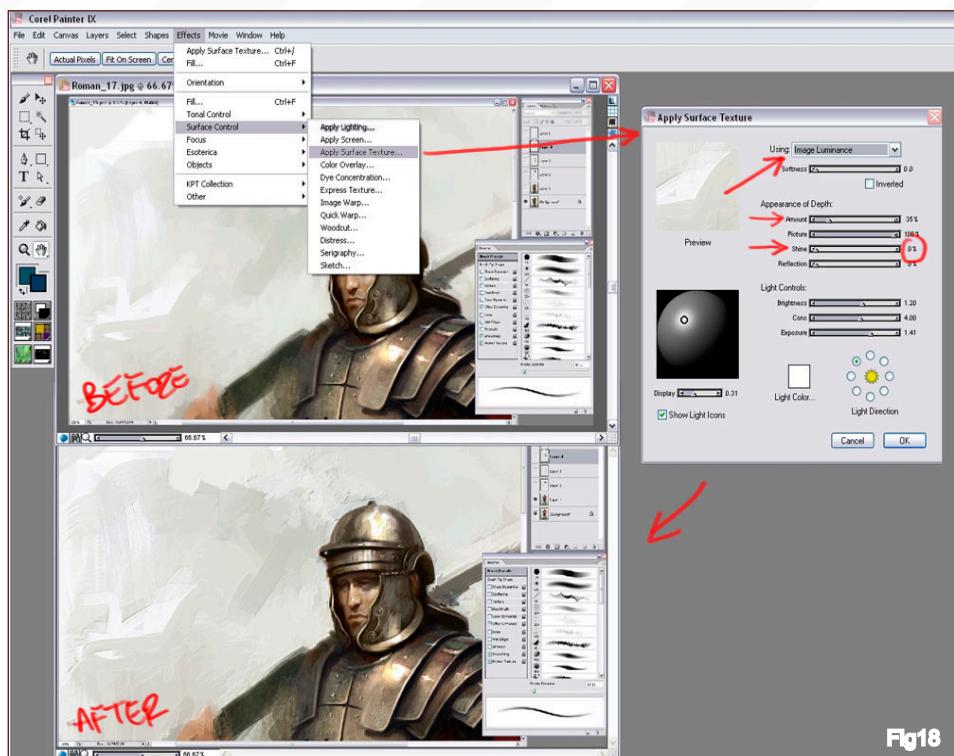


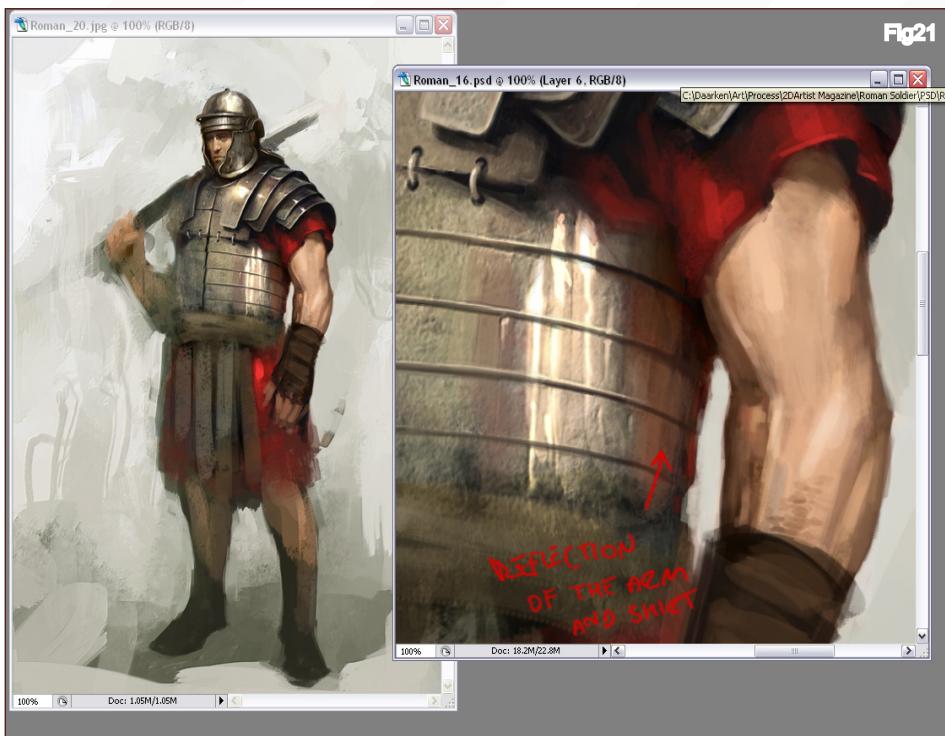
Fig18



Fig19



Fig20



One thing you want to remember when painting armour is that armour reflects everything around it. In this case I made sure to put in the reflection of the arm and the red sleeve (Fig.21-24). The painting is nearing the end, and only a few more parts need refining (Fig.25-27). I also now start to put in the final little details, like the straps on the front of the armour and on the helmet (Fig.28).

Fig22



Fig23





Fig24



Fig25



Fig26



Fig27



Fig28

One of the problems I always have is knowing when I am finished. Usually, by the end of a painting I start getting tired of it, and sometimes I start to get lazy (Fig.29). I really didn't want to finish the legs, but I felt that since the rest of the illustration was so refined that I kind of had to finish the legs as well. I still left the back leg a bit unrefined, as well as the back arm. I still don't feel happy with his left leg, but I will go ahead and call it finished (Fig.30). Here is the final image. I hope you will learn something from this tutorial. Next month (February Issue) will be 'Oriental Japanese Armour'.

Daarken

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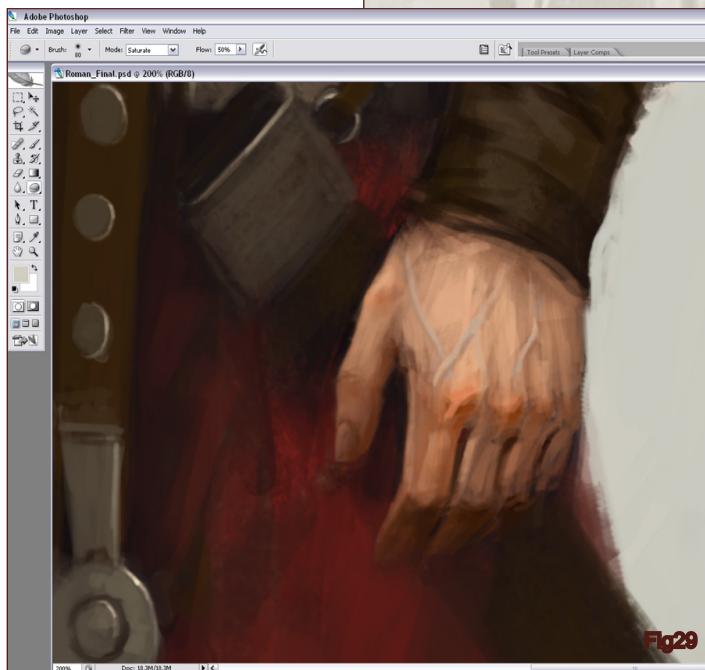


Fig29



Fig30

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2d
Artist

ARTIST

This is a digital painting of my son, Emmett, which I did mainly as a study by referencing an original photo image. This I felt would lead to a greater understanding of form, colour selection, colour blending, texturing and overall how to generally go about painting a person and cloth materials, since I am relatively new to figure painting...

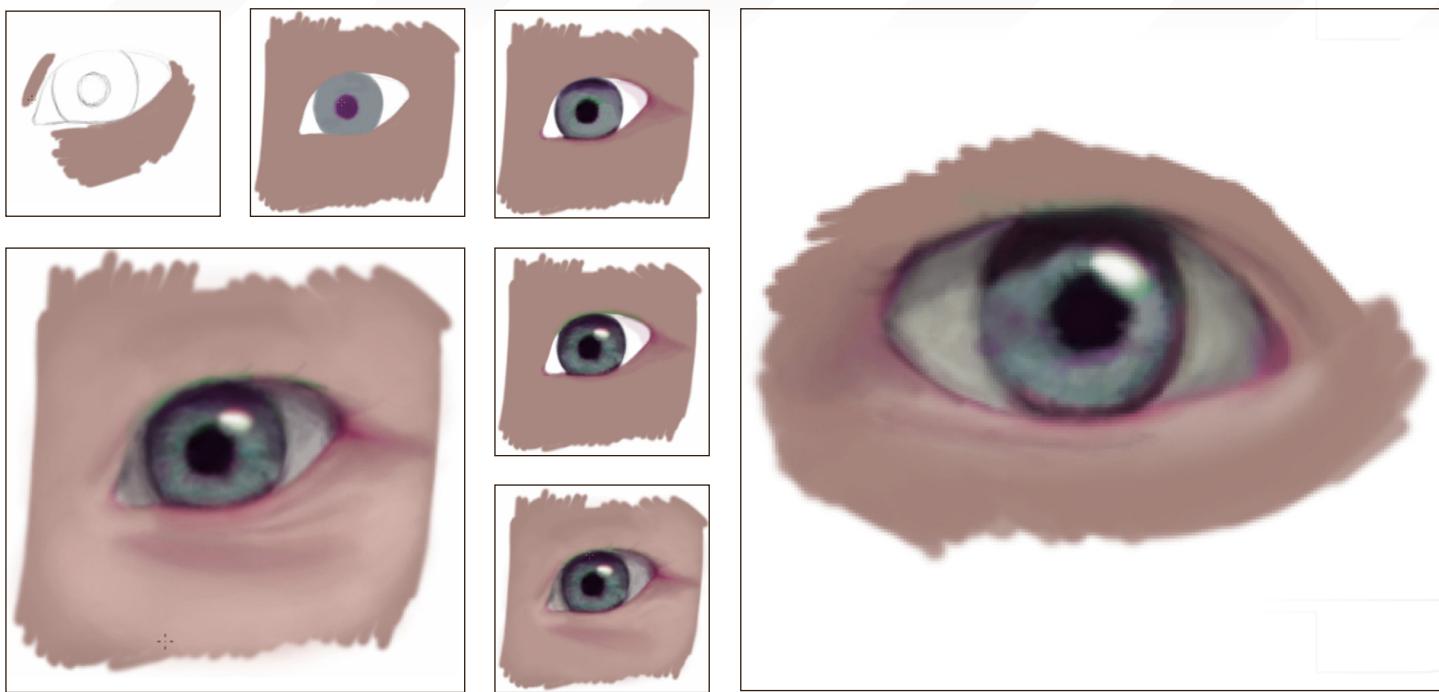


Emmett

Created In: Photoshop CS2

The entire image was done in Photoshop CS2 over a period of two weeks (a couple of hours a night, most nights), mainly using standard brushes (varying in size and opacity but always fully feathered), a Wacom Intuos3 9X12 tablet, and a 21" CRT monitor. The final image ended up being 3500x4500 pixels (including white areas) and I worked at 1000dpi. Here I will take you through all of the steps I took to end up with the final image. As this was a learning process for me, some of my methods and techniques may not be what you seasoned 2D artists are used to, but I'm pleased with the final result and hope this might help, encourage or possibly even inspire in some aspects, regardless of skill level. The process snapshot images alone, I hope, are fairly self-explanatory, but I have included brief text descriptions along the way. Enjoy!



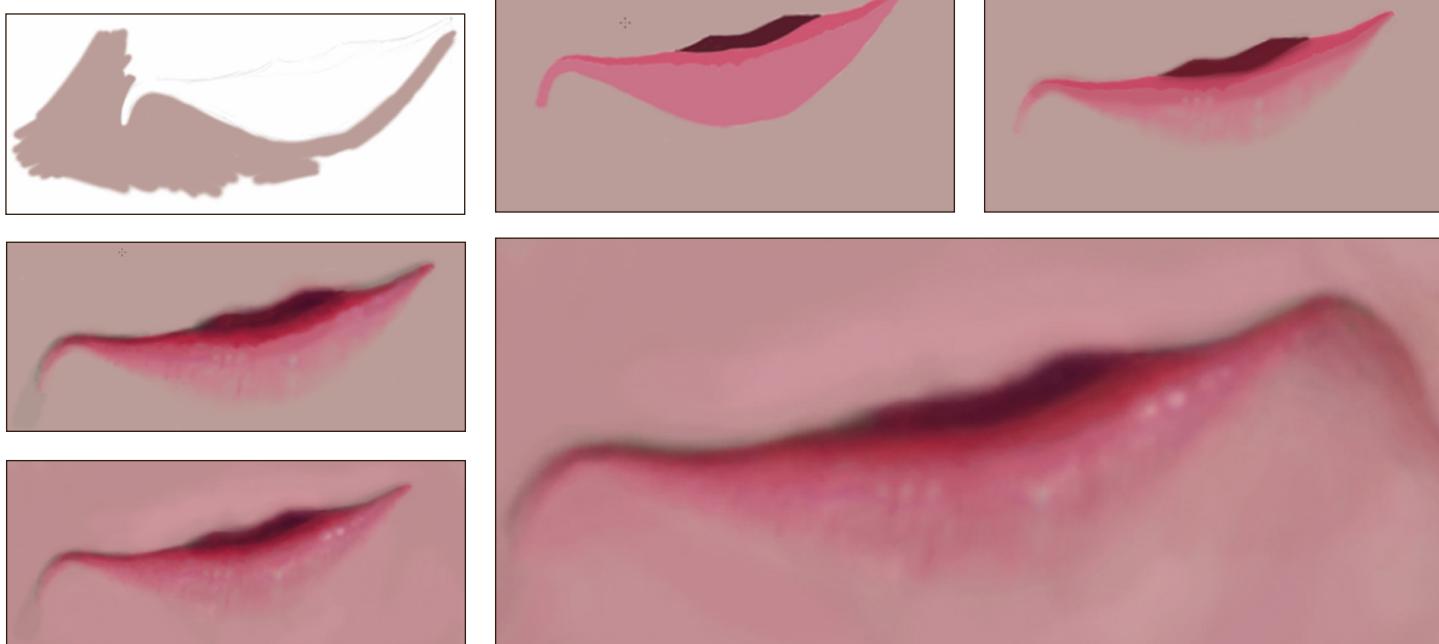


Step 1: The right eye (from a viewer's perspective) was my starting point. I outlined the main shape of the eye, constantly referencing the original, and surrounded that with the darkest skin tone in that area. I then began to fill in the basic colours. Next I added detail by layering at a very low opacity, so the colours gradually darken and blend well, and then I applied the lighter colour over the top in the same fashion. One thing I found about the reference image was that where there are dark and light areas beside one another, there was

always either a green, purple or yellow subtle line separating the areas (which is due to the vignette effect from the camera). I added these separating lines in to achieve more accurate realism (see the 4th stage: the green edge along the top of the eye for an example of this).

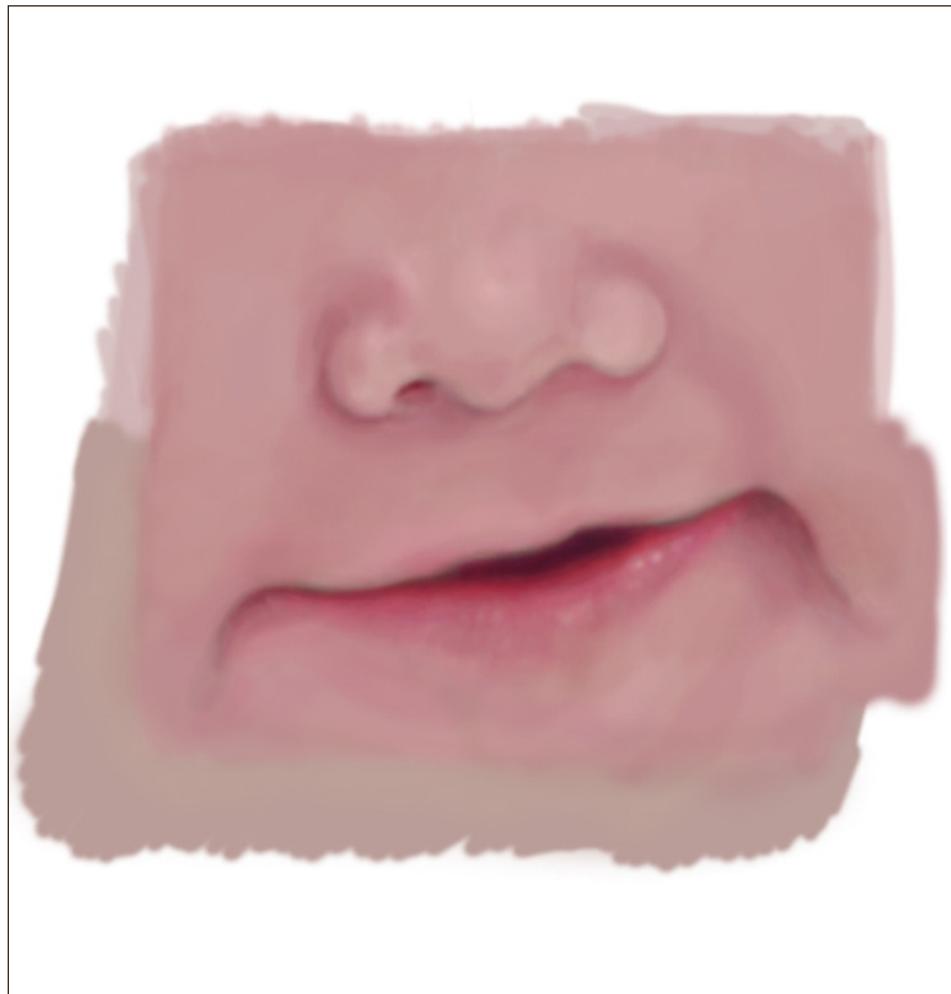
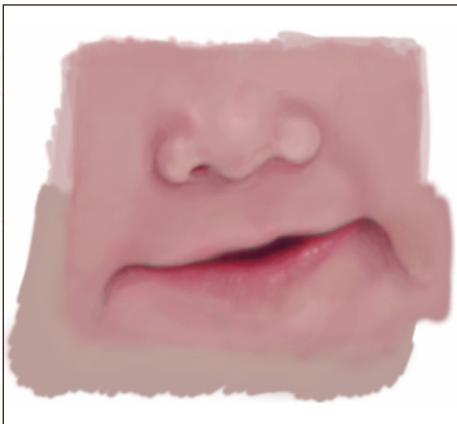
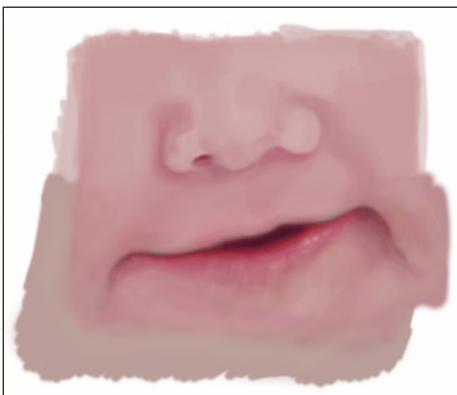
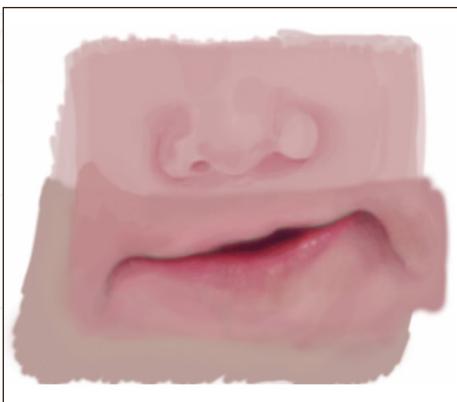
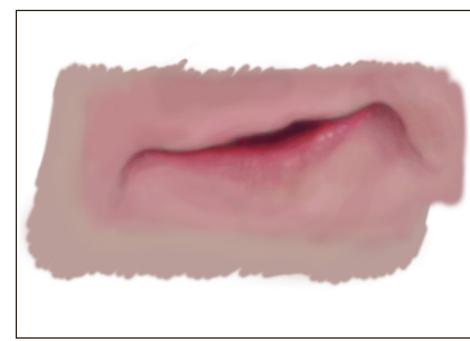
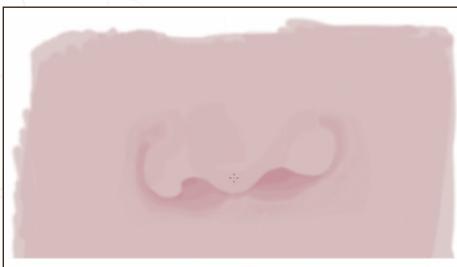
Step 2: The same steps also apply for the left eye.

Step 3: I then went on to paint the mouth, using the same technique; first an outline, surrounded by the lightest skin tone; then blocking in the basic colours, both light and dark. Since my methods involved using a very low opacity, one thing I found necessary was selecting a more saturated colour than what appeared to be the actual colour in the reference photo, and layering this on top of the basic colours I began with.

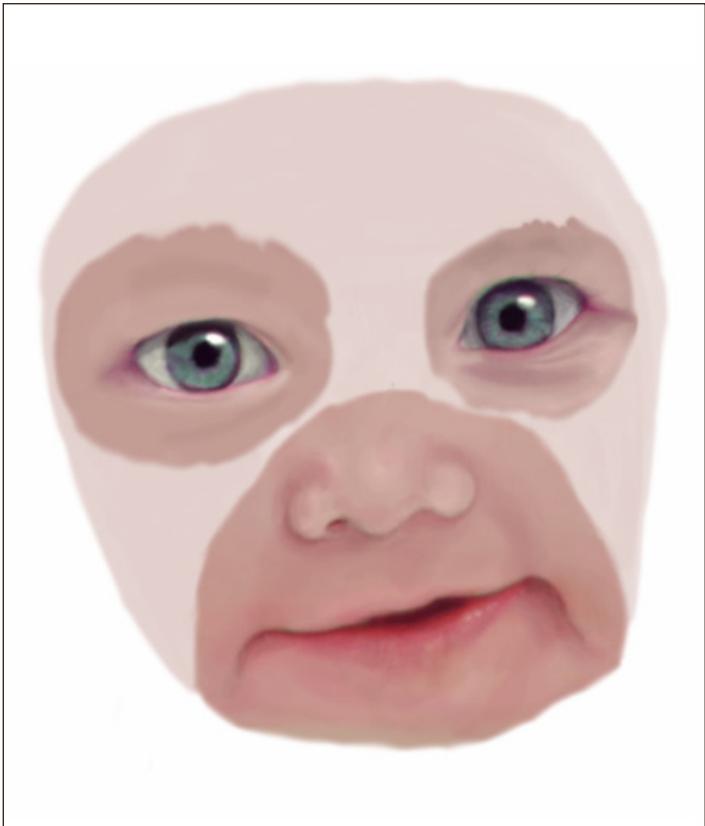
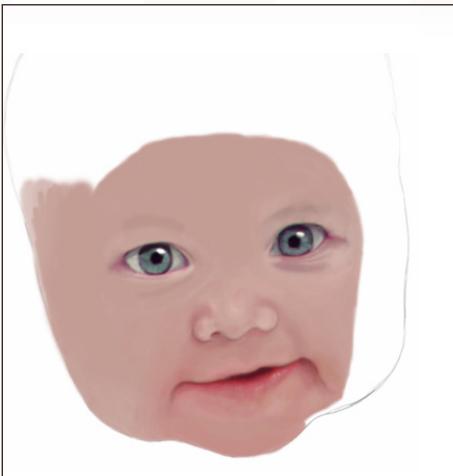


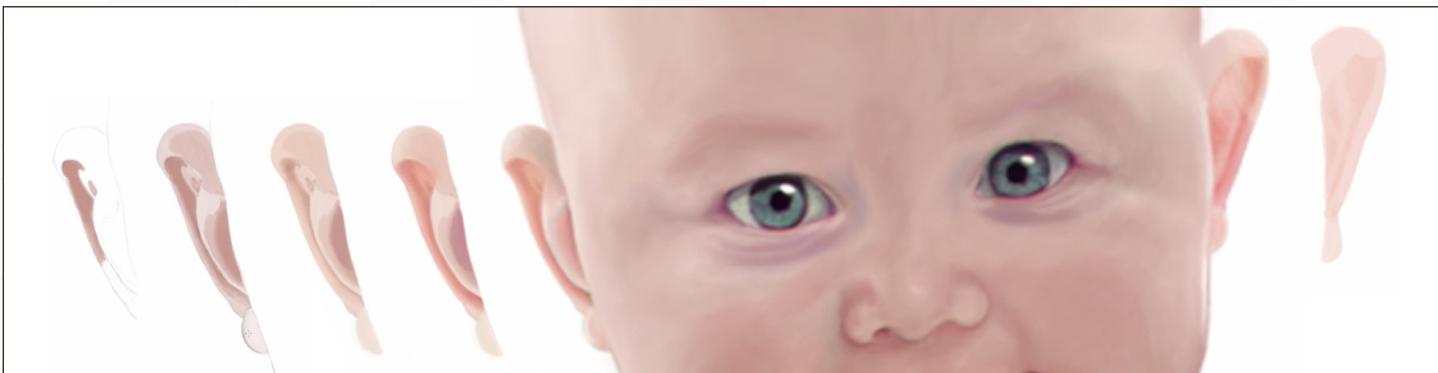


Step 4: The nose was the next part I painted. I found this to be the most difficult part yet, as there were no hard edges as such, just blending and more blending between the nose, upper-lip and cheek areas. Since I had already painted the mouth, to blend this and the nose area together, I used the colour selection tool and picked colour from this (and increased saturation on that colour, as I mentioned). **Note:** I did not pick colour from the original image at any point - colours were picked only from the features I had already painted. For blending these two facial features, I had to select a large brush (as large as possible, but not so big that I would be painting over areas I didn't want to affect. The diameter was just smaller than the distance from the bottom of the nose to the top of the lips) and set it to an opacity of only 3 or 4. A very slight yellow wash over everything, I found, helped with achieving the look of natural-looking skin here. The two separate layers show you exactly what had to be done to integrate them; the nose layer, the mouth layer and finally the nose & mouth layer combined.



Step 5: In this step, for the face and head, I had to integrate all the facial features and block in the head shape. I began by aligning the eye, nose and mouth layers. I outlined the head shape around these layers and coloured it in the darkest skin tone, quickly blending the features. Next I painted the light areas of the head and matched and blended all the colours of each layer edge. You can see all of the facial features aligned correctly, and then the finished head for this step.



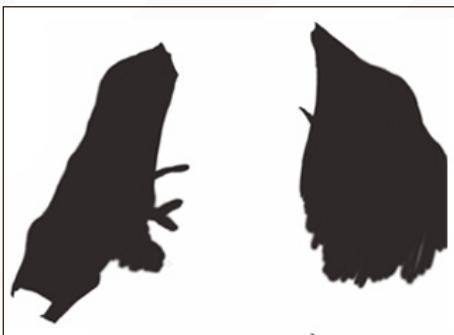


Step 6: Here you have the stages I went through when painting the ears, and again the procedure is much the same as before; draw an outline; block in basic colour; go over this with a very opaque brush in a colour which is more saturated than the actual colour required. The finishing steps were getting the highlights and shading correct.

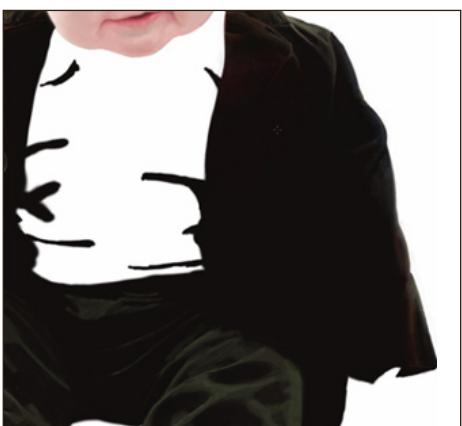
Step 7: The last thing to be painted on the head (except for minor touch-ups all over), was the hair. Generally I used browns, yellows, reds (for blending with the head) and hints of purple for this - all varying in tone. I started with the general hair shape in a single light-brown colour

(one of the darker tones in the hair region). Next I added yellow over this to suggest strands of hair. The brighter the yellow, the darker the brown directly beside it, but no hard-edges at all. There was not much to painting the hair, as it is mainly suggestive detail, but blending with the head proved difficult. I found I had to repaint the forehead a few times to get the colours between the hair areas and head right. The last step was painting and blending the crimson shadow of the hair in the centre of the forehead.





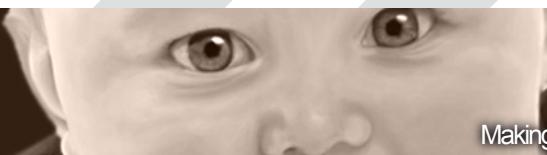
Step 8: The jacket. As can be seen in the images on the left, I started here by getting the shapes of the jacket and trousers as close as possible, and by filling in the areas with one colour each. For the jacket, I erased the lighter areas from the jacket (since both were quite dark) and then I filled in the erased areas with the lighter, brown colour on a lower layer. There are really only three colours used here; brown, dark red (this might be hard to see over the dark brown) and a dark-blue edge down the sleeves. On the upper layer I then went over everything and blended both layers together, using similar methods as before (to blending the nose) using a small (approx. size 4) splattered, texture brush, with high opacity but as close to the correct colour as possible. I painted in the jacket button also, in mainly dark green (low saturation), near black and white colours (on the green palette) and gave it purple edges. For the trousers, I etched in patches of dark green indicating where the highlighted areas and any parts in shadow were.





Step 9: Trousers. Next, working on the right trouser leg first, I added a layer of colour, slightly darker than mid-tone green over all. Then, in dark green (almost black), using the same splattered texture brush I used on the jacket, I painted in and around the edges of all the areas in shadow, leaning heavier on the pen for larger, darker texture closest to the darkest areas. At the top and down the side of the leg, I painted on a more subtle texture of reddish brown. I did this also in areas where the shadow was less dark, separating the very light from very dark areas. For the next step, the lines in the corduroy trousers, I created a new layer and simply painted on very dark lines (small brush, high opacity of about 90) following the contours and folds in the cloth. I then duplicated this layer, lowered the opacity of one to about half way and blurred the other layer. Finally I added in the highlights of near white from the green palette along the creases, the corduroy lines and the knee area. The same steps were used for each trouser leg but the left one got less highlights.



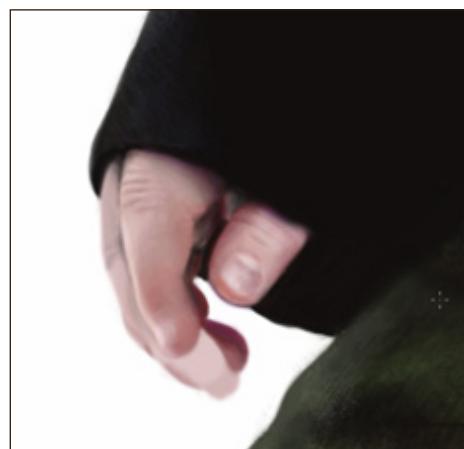
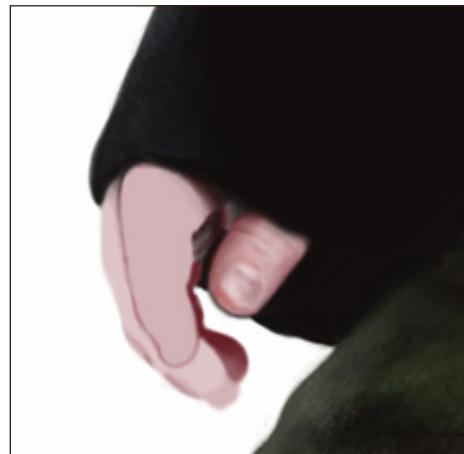
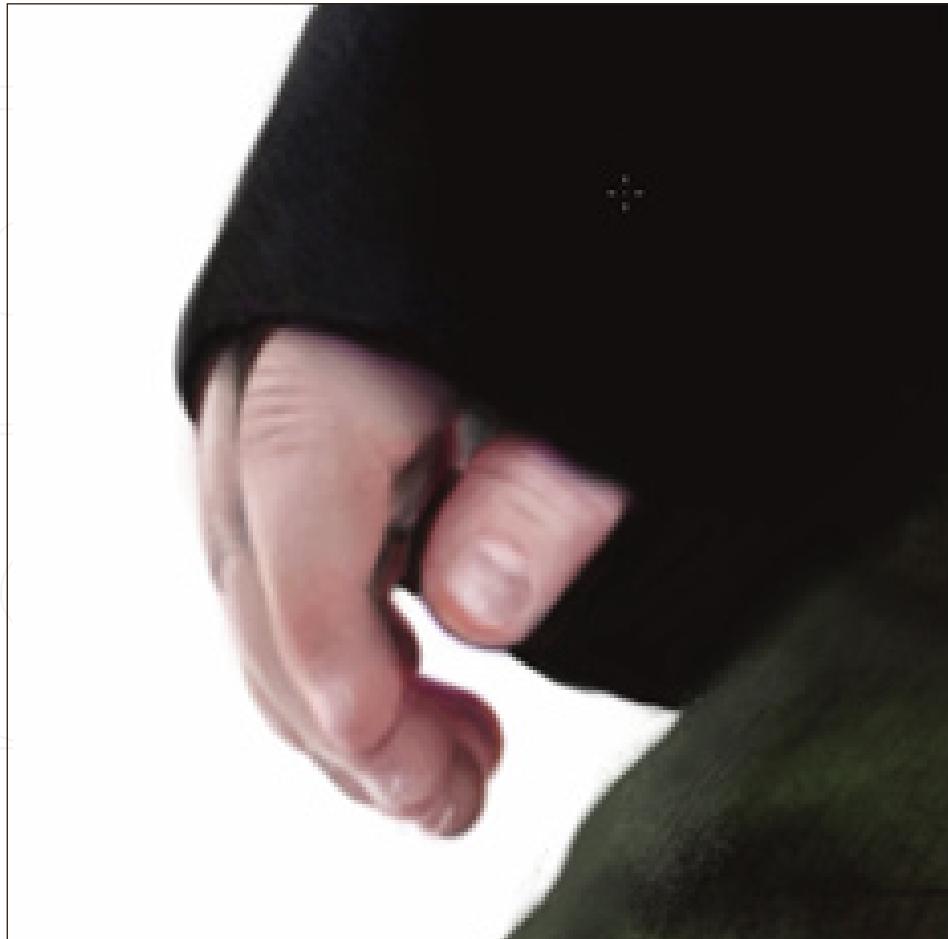
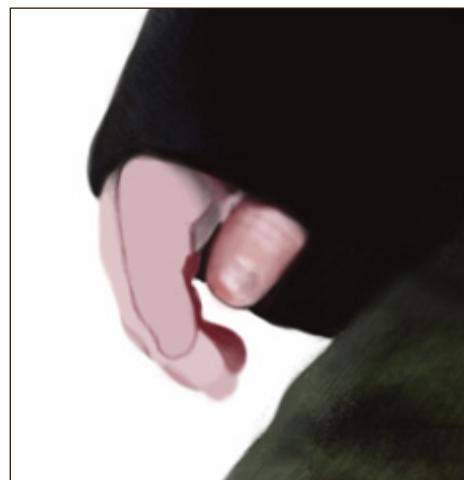
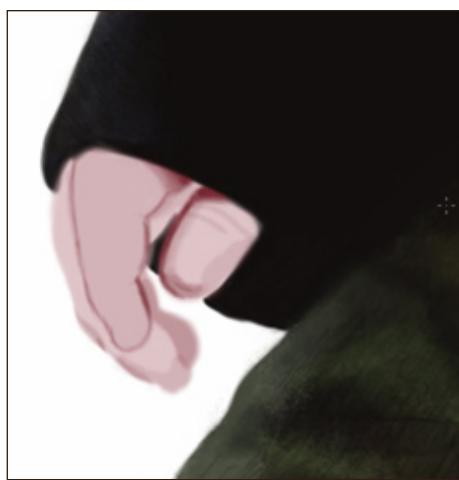
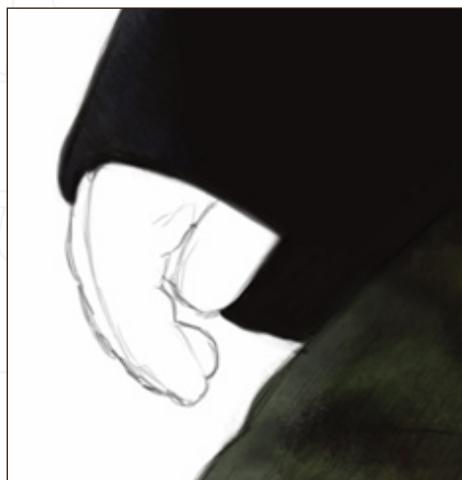


Step 10: Out of the entire painting, the hands and feet, I found, were the most enjoyable to paint, both requiring nearly all the techniques I used up to this point (meaning good practice) and ending in a nice result I didn't expect to achieve. The process consisted of; colour blending of light and dark areas, slight texturing, colour selection (again for light and dark areas) and precise outline drawing both on and around the hands and feet. There is a close-up of left foot before and after texturing. The snapshots show most of the process; I started with an outline and this time filled in the

area with a pale pink colour. Next, using a very small brush of high opacity, I outlined all of the toes, creases and dimple (on the right foot). I then went over all this a few times, and added darker patches to the rest of the feet, in a very saturated reddish pink (opacity only about 15) and blended the pale pink and reddish pink colours together. After this, I went over everything with the splattered texture brush I mentioned before, in a dark purple (opacity of about 30) and the same in pale yellow. I increased saturation and colour darkness level for the darker areas, and the opposite for the bright areas and highlights. I also added hints of blue in places to suggest veins.

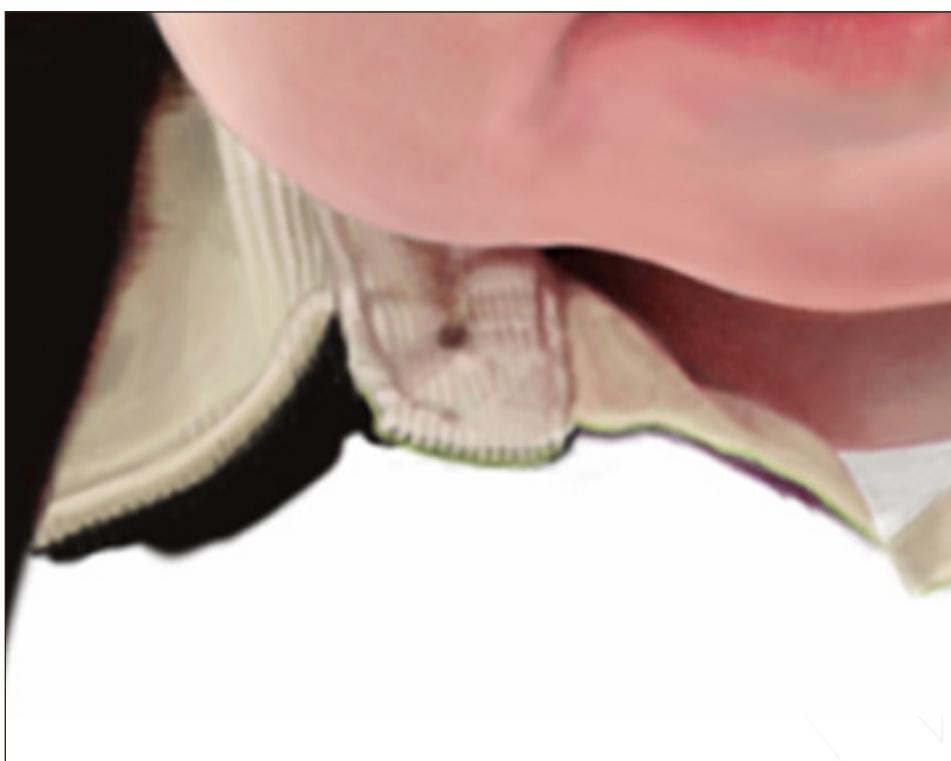


Step n: The right hand (or two fingers in this case) was actually very simple, as you can see from the snapshot, just pale pink, red and the brown from the jacket all blended together. The hand on the left took the very same steps as the feet, except there was a dark-brown area in behind the thumb.



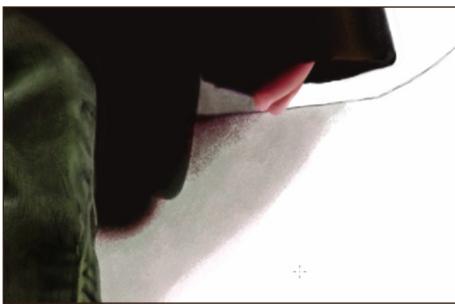
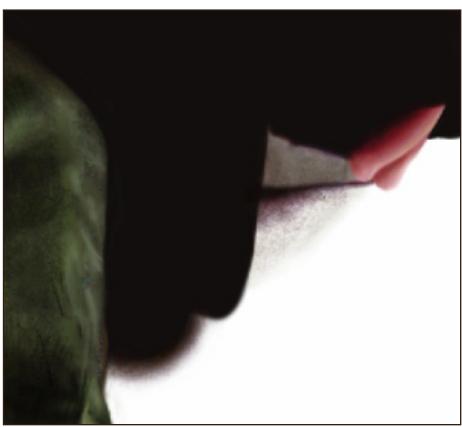


Step 12: Above are the steps I took to paint the neck and shirt collar. The method for painting the neck is the same as before, for the face, except for the nearly black area in shadow (colour taken from the red palette) and with a lot of desaturated red at low opacity (giving a dark grey) washed over the whole area. I began on the shirt by filling in the area with a cream colour. Next I sketched the outlines where the shirt material is joined and I drew in some grey lines for the corduroy (from the red colour palette) and blended this into the jacket using crimson and brown. I painted over all areas here using red (very low opacity of about 3) to gradually blend giving a pink tint and the edge of the shirt outlined in green. The 'white' T-shirt only required a wash of grey texture. There is a zoomed-in shot showing how I applied and layered colour to the shirt collar.





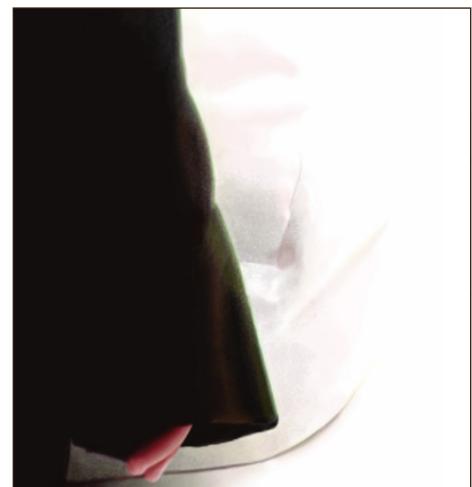
Step 13: For the jumper, I began by creating a new layer and placing it behind the rest of the image. On this I tried using a pale brown colour and painted the collar of the jumper on another new layer, above all the other layers. This pale brown under-layer made it quite difficult to see clearly, the more stitching detail I added, so I replaced this with a plain, darker brown colour. Each stitch on the jumper was painstakingly painted (and shaded and highlighted) one-by-one. Nearing the end of the painting of the jumper, most of these stitches then had to be painted over a few times, as well as the lines between the stitches (in red and purple), to get the detail, colour and lighting closer to the original. Starting with the collar of the jumper made it a little easier to get the lines of stitches in the right place but this was no easy task despite this. In the beginning, I tried counting the stitches on the original and drawing one row, from right to left, to the centre line of stitches, but this quickly became complicated with the folds and patterns on the jumper and so I had to change my method. Instead, I drew vertical lines, indicating where the stitches were, and then drew the stitches over these lines. This method proved better and more accurate but was extremely time consuming. The design on the jumper was done in the very same way but using a very pale brown (near white) and washing over this with yellow and red (very low opacity). Taking the brighter parts of the jumper into account, I drew on rough patches of light brown (on a new layer) so I would know when to change the colour of the stitches and save time. To finish off the jumper, the dark stitches (along the bottom) and folded parts in shadow were next. I did these areas by layering dark colours (red, yellow from the dark end of the palette and purple) and splattered texture of medium opacity over the previously painted stitches. I gave many areas of the jumper a wash of purple and touched up the highlights in brown/yellow.



Step 14: Next was the shadow. This was actually one of the more difficult parts to paint out of the entire picture, as it required blending dark and mid-tone colours with very light colour, and fading off to white. This consisted of many tones, and every additional colour had to be smoothly blended with the ones already down, so the whole area had to be painted over again and again. I started by painting a general area, where the shadow was, in a pale green (grey) and then worked on the darkest areas over this. These were done in dark green, purple and navy around the edges of the trousers. Next I washed over the whole shadow in a dark purple texture (opacity of about 10) and again in dark green. On top of this I added a pale green wash and blended all together, but keeping certain areas lighter than others. I then went over the edges in purple with low opacity, blended that in and went over the purple edge in yellow and faded this off to white.



Step 15: The very final part of the painting was the cushion (not including the dark outline at the bottom which was done during the shadow stage). The cushion is just barely visible and was quite easy to paint (took about 15 minutes). It took a wash of yellow along the edge of the sleeve, some pink and grey (from the red palette) blobs of a texture brush (opacity at 10), and simply a smaller brush for the finer parts.



The finished painting is on a transparent background, which concludes the Making Of walk-through for my painting, "Emmett". I hope you have found it useful in some respect. At the end of it all, I find myself better able to blend colour, select colour (taking the brush opacity into account) and do some basic texturing. Also, I feel more confident with painting cloth and figures. All in all, I achieved what I set out to do. I fully recommend similar studies, at least to those of you who are new to digital painting (or painting applications), as you can learn a great deal from it in a reasonably short amount of time, but it does require a lot of patience.

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"Pardon me" is part of a series of images which include bugs, creatures, micro robots etc., plus illustrations of short stories included. Y.Soner Yurtseven found from sketching to painting was so enjoyable that he would like to share the working progress steps with you all...

Pardon Me

Fig01



Step 1 The first step, which is the most important step, is composing the concept and making the best sketch to start painting. The concept was about two creatures in love, and one gets annoyed by the other. Fig.01 shows the sketch step, which I was satisfied with.

Step 2 After the sketching was done, I started to compose a background using the brushes. In my opinion, brushes are a very important tool to use and you can make different kinds of brushes yourself. You can use different techniques to compose your own brushes, such as using a detail of a photo, which is the most common way to do so. Also working with some abstract or marked shapes could be a way too. By these techniques you could have a brush archive belonging to your needs, which would bring simplicity to your works. As seen in the images, you can make a brush from the 'Edit/ Define Brush Preset' sections (Fig.01, 03 & 04).

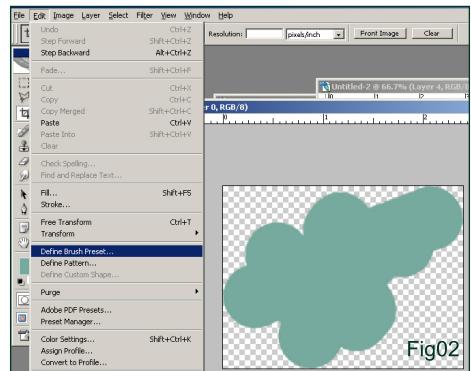


Fig02

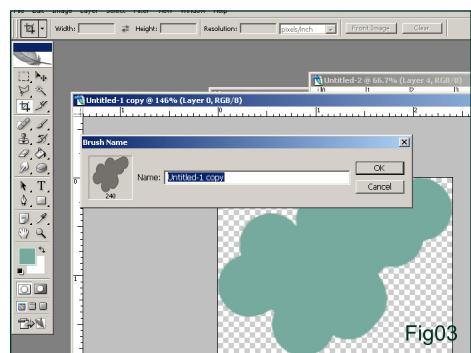


Fig03

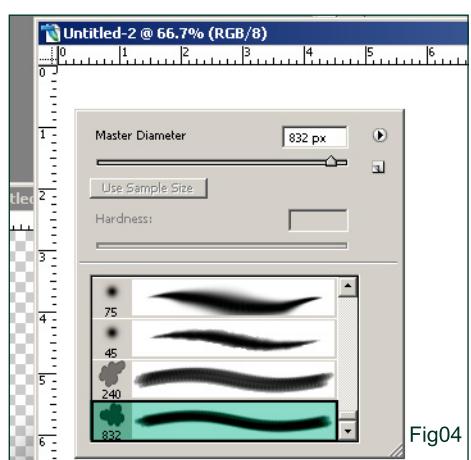
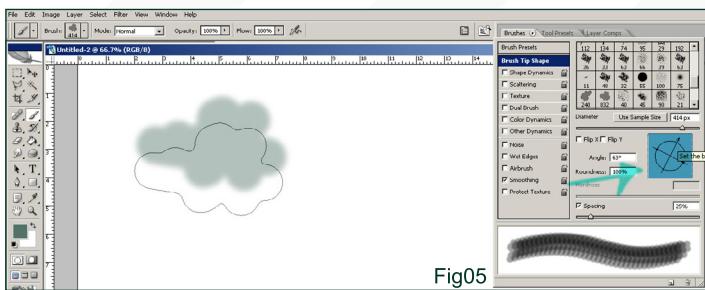


Fig04



Step 3 The next step is choosing the brush and painting in the background. Be careful though, as using the brush in the same way and angle can cause the painting to become monotone (Fig.05).

Step 4 After I get the enough saturation, I use some filters (Gaussian Blur) to achieve an out-of-focus blur, due to the distance (Fig.06).

Step 5 For the characters and the other details, I started by filling the general lines and giving them dimensions. Due to the direction of light, the shadows are fixed. The light is from a cloudy daylight, so there wouldn't be clear shining light, but vivid colours (Fig.07 & 08).

Step 6 Fig.09 shows the character after the light and shadows have helped produced some other details (Fig.09).

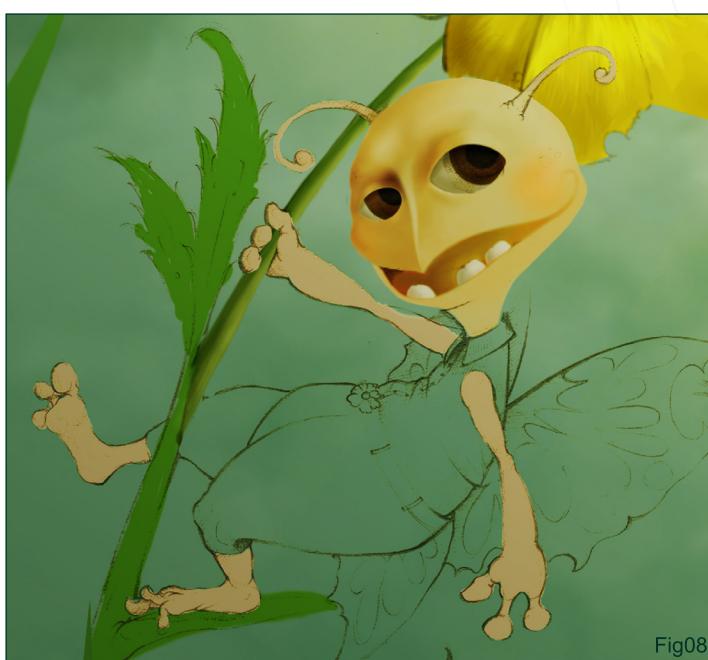


Fig10



Fig12a

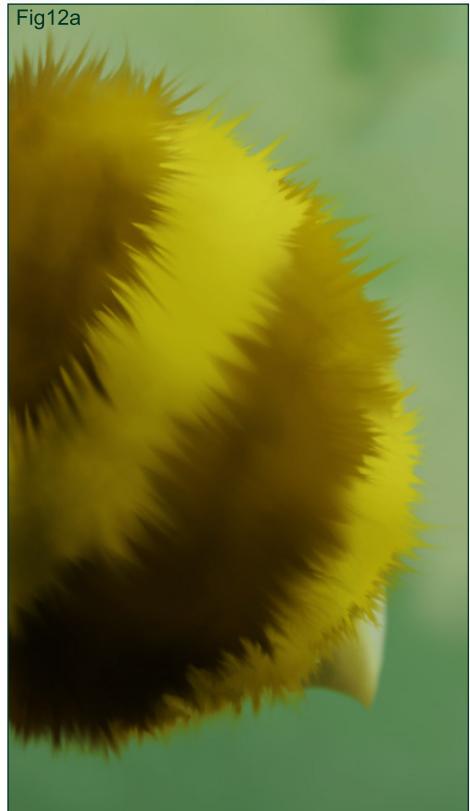
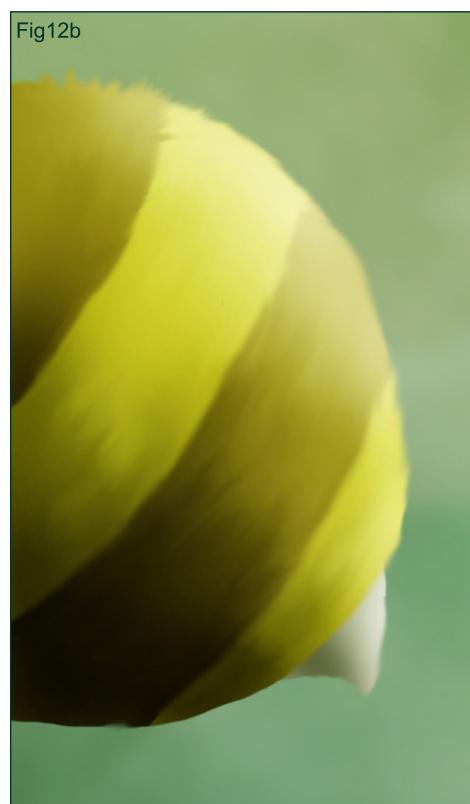


Fig11



Fig12b



Step 7 At last, some light and shadow effects are added. Whilst adding the details and effects, working on different layers is better for any kinds of changes or improvements (Fig.10 & 11).

Step 8 The bee was created mostly to give depth to the illustration. So the bee is as a sketch, and seems unfinished because of the importance range. The fur details are committed on the bee after the general shadows are done (Fig.12a & 12b).

Fig14



Fig13

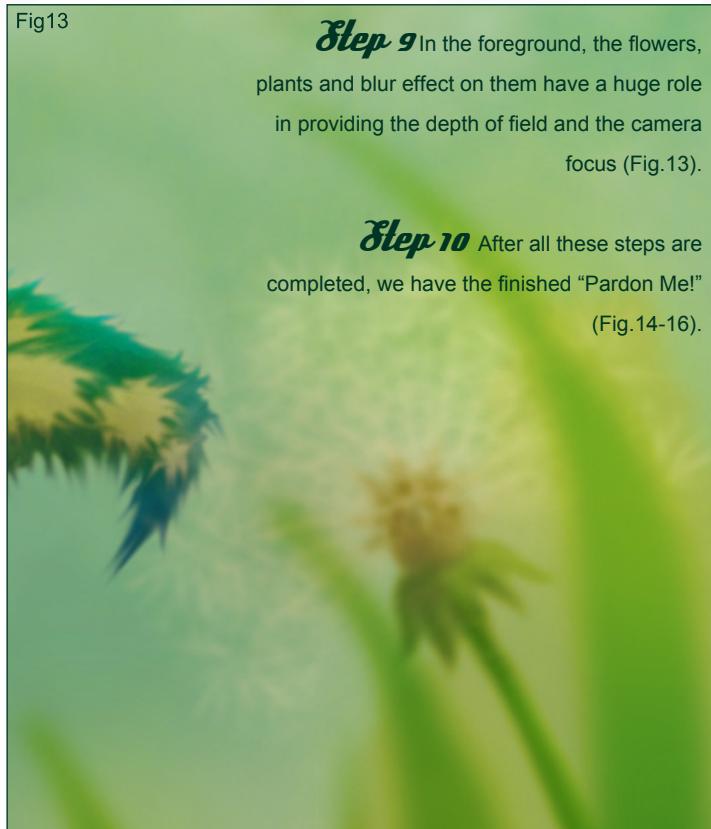
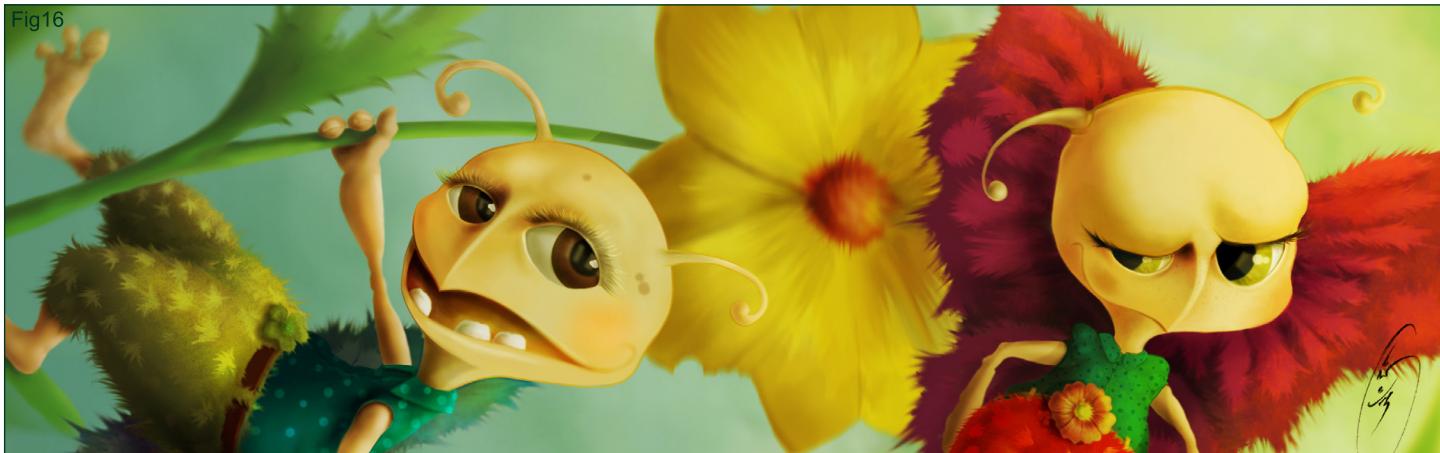


Fig15



Fig16





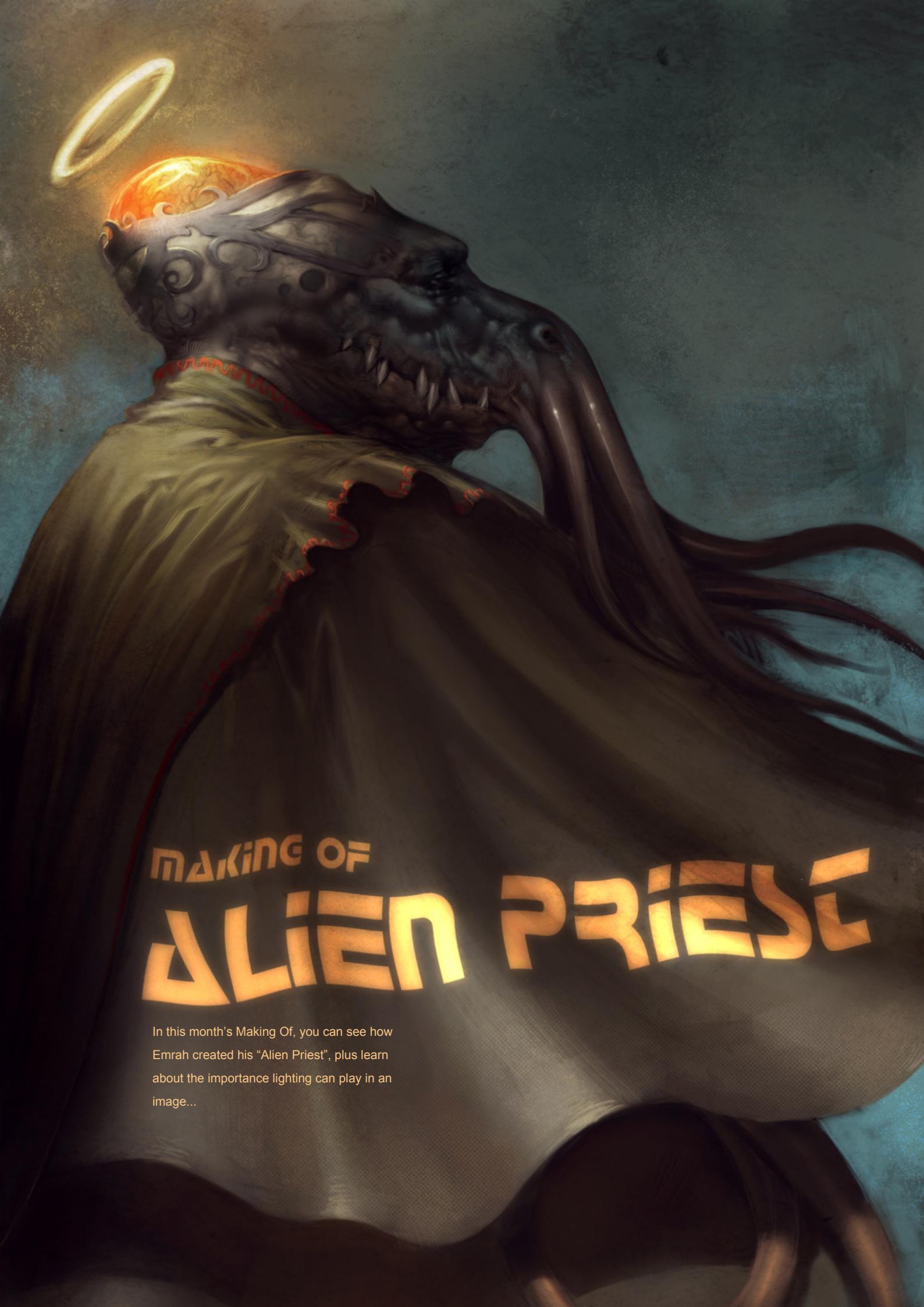
Y.Soner Yurtseven

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MAKING OF ALIEN PRIEST

In this month's Making Of, you can see how Emrah created his "Alien Priest", plus learn about the importance lighting can play in an image...

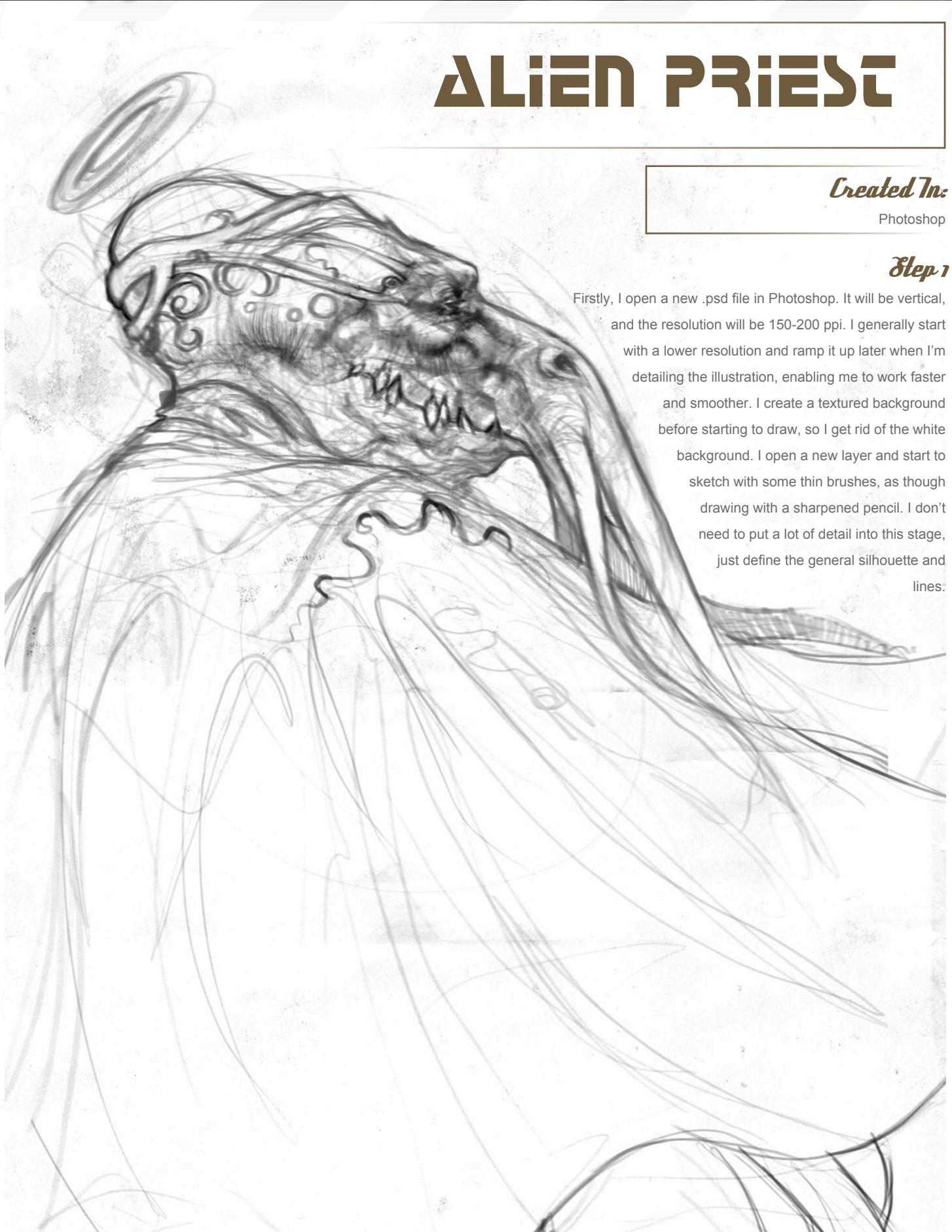
ALIEN PRIEST

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Photoshop

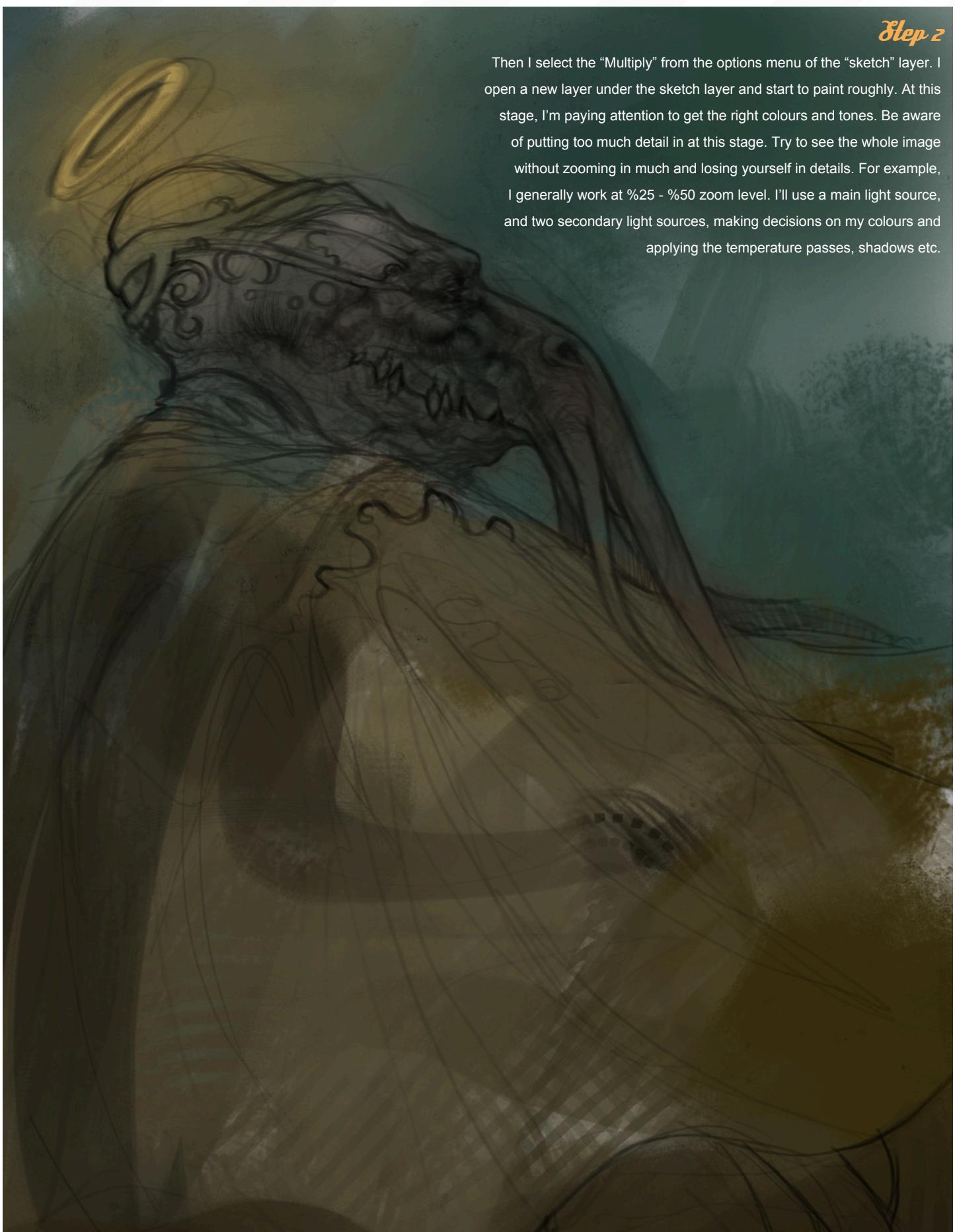
Step 1

Firstly, I open a new .psd file in Photoshop. It will be vertical, and the resolution will be 150-200 ppi. I generally start with a lower resolution and ramp it up later when I'm detailing the illustration, enabling me to work faster and smoother. I create a textured background before starting to draw, so I get rid of the white background. I open a new layer and start to sketch with some thin brushes, as though drawing with a sharpened pencil. I don't need to put a lot of detail into this stage, just define the general silhouette and lines.



Step 2

Then I select the "Multiply" from the options menu of the "sketch" layer. I open a new layer under the sketch layer and start to paint roughly. At this stage, I'm paying attention to get the right colours and tones. Be aware of putting too much detail in at this stage. Try to see the whole image without zooming in much and losing yourself in details. For example, I generally work at %25 - %50 zoom level. I'll use a main light source, and two secondary light sources, making decisions on my colours and applying the temperature passes, shadows etc.





Step 3

I continue to paint on to the layer under the sketch layer, trying to get the colours as good possible. I decide on where the highlights are to be placed in accordance with the position of the light source. As you can see, I have covered all of the canvas as I don't want to see any white areas in my image. If you leave any white spaces, you can't focus on your image and can't see it as a whole. Therefore, it's better to paint all of the canvas with at least one colour.

Step 4

I start to paint over the sketch layer in this step. I open a new layer at the top and start to paint over the lines and add details. You can also zoom in at this stage. Also, it's totally up to you that how much time you are going to spend on your image. You can paint it to the final detail or finish it just in 3-4 hours like me. It's a matter of choice and style in the end. I use several different brushes, but generally textured brushes in Photoshop as I can put more detail and richness into my image in a very short time this way.



Step 5

I'm almost done. I save the file and open it in Painter (yes, I use both software packages and go back and forth). I'll paint some of the soft passes on the image in Painter, such as the drapery and the details on the face. I'm more accustomed to creating these in Painter - it somehow feels softer than PS - but ultimately you can paint in either. I use several brushes, like acrylic and oil, and I also use the "Glow tool" to brighten the halo at the top of the alien's head.



**Step 6**

Now I save the .psd file again and open it in PS. It's time to "polish" the painting. I'll make some adjustments on the image, such as the colour balance, brightness, contrast and saturation. I open some "Adjustment Layers" and apply these steps; changing some colours, decreasing the saturation and darkening the image a little. As a final step, I open a new layer and apply some textures on top of the image to provide more richness. I set the layer properties to 'Multiply' or 'Overlay', and absorb them. You can observe the 3 light sources in this phase; the main light source and the secondary light source.

A dark, atmospheric painting of a creature, possibly a dragon or a large bird, shown from the side and slightly behind. The creature has a large, ornate golden eye with intricate patterns, glowing with a warm light. Its head is turned back, showing a mouth full of sharp, white, serrated teeth. It wears a thick, dark collar with a red, jagged patterned edge. The body is covered in dark, textured scales. A bright, glowing ring surrounds the eye, and a smaller ring is visible above it. The background is a dark, mottled blue.

If you want to create eye-catching images, you need to pay attention to
the harmony of light and shadow and understanding colour theory is key
to your painting. I hope this is a useful tutorial for you.

Take care.

Emrah Elmasli

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next month

artist

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